JAMES D. SMART'S PARADOXICAL UNDERSTANDING OF

HUMAN NATURE AS A THEORETICAL BASIS FOR

A COMPREHENSIVE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM


A Dissertation

Presented to

the Faculty of the

School of Theology at Claremont


In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy


by

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May  1996

This dissertation, written by

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Claremont in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of

### DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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Abstract

James D. Smart's Paradoxical Understanding of
Human Nature as a Theoretical Basis for
a Comprehensive Religious Education Curriculum

by Yuh Sung-Hoon

This dissertation is an interpretation of James D.
Smart's paradoxical understanding of human nature as a
theoretical basis for a comprehensive curriculum for religious
education.   A presupposition of this discussion is that a
community's understanding of human nature is one of the most
influential elements in determining the design and components
of religious curriculum.   Two pivotal issues involved in this
dissertation are the historical controversy regarding
religious education curriculum and the anthropology underlying
that controversy.

The methodological heart of this dissertation is the
comparative study of the conceptions of human nature in Smart
and in representatives of the more extreme positions of
conservative-evangelism and liberal-progressivism.  Compared
with  conservative-evangelistic  and  liberal-progressive
approaches to anthropology and education, Smart's paradoxical
understanding of human nature is superior in guiding a
comprehensive plan for religious education.   His view of
paradox offers a synthetic mechanism which combines radically
different elements which are seen as mutually contradictory in
the other views.

This dissertation includes discussions of curriculum
theorists' efforts to reconceptualize curriculum toward more

comprehensiveness. The unique purpose of this dissertation is to identify the functional relationship between a community's understanding of human nature and its decisions regarding the characteristics of religious education curriculum, and also to confirm the effectiveness of Smart's paradoxical anthropology in creating a comprehensive curriculum.

The pedagogical and anthropological discussions of this dissertation are contextually grounded in Christian religious communities in which very different educational-theological traditions co-exist. Korean and Korean-American churches are good examples, showing that contradicting traditions of pedagogy and theology currently co-exist as ongoing influences on religious practice. However, the scope of this dissertation is not limited to the specific situation of the Korean and Korean-American churches, for a comprehensive idea of religious curriculum is needed more broadly in order to overcome the theological-pedagogical conflicts within many different communities.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

#### The Purpose

Dichotomy is an enemy of comprehensive thinking. A dichotomy is a classification that divides realities into two mutually exclusive groups.[1] In understanding a reality, the most critical problem of a dichotomous way of thinking is its exclusive nature: namely, it tends to overemphasize one of the many aspects of the reality, consciously ignoring or unconsciously neglecting the others. Such exclusive thinking in dichotomies easily leads into narrow understanding of a reality, and leads to a distortion in theory and ineffectiveness in practice.

The problems of dichotomous thinking have been also deeply connected with theories of religious education. Throughout the history of religious education, dichotomous thinking is found in relation to many important issues, including the content of education, the nature of learners, the teaching-learning model, and components of religious curriculum. Actually, these dichotomies have resulted in critical antitheses, which are patterns of thinking that have confused the issues of life for Christians and even shattered the unity of the Church in the history of religious

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[1] "Dichotomy," in The Random House College Dictionary, 2nd ed.

education.[2] The confrontation between conservative-evangelism and liberal-progressivism is a good example of the critical conflicts of religious education in the United States.[3]

Dichotonomous tensions have been exemplified in various debates, including debates regarding: Bible-oriented versus life-oriented curriculum resources, historical tradition versus contemporary experience, transmissive education versus experience education, and development-oriented versus conversion-oriented education.[4] In terms of curriculum forms and teaching-learning methods, the tensions have also been raised between uniform versus graded lesson plans and between indoctrination versus problem-solving methods.

In the early 1980s, Mary Elizabeth Moore, Professor of Theology and Christian Education of the School of Theology at Claremont and Professor of Religion at the Claremont Graduate School, suggested a provocative way to transcend the dualistic understandings of religious education, which are based on a dichotonomous idea of tradition and transformation, or continuity and change. She proposed education for continuity

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[2] James D. Smart, The Teaching Ministry of the Church (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954), 57.

[3] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 57-58.

[4] Jack L. Seymour and Carol A. Wehrheim, "Faith Seeking Understanding: Interpretation as a Task of Christian Education," and Donald E. Miller, "The Developmental Approach to Christian Education," in Contemporary Approaches to Christian Education, eds. Jack L. Seymour and Donald E. Miller (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1982), 123-24, 99-100; Mary Elizabeth Moore, Education for Continuity and Change (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1983), 27-55.

and change.  One of Moore's main concerns, expressed in her book <u>Education for Continuity and Change</u>, was how our religious educators could overcome dualistic ways of thinking in planning religious education.  This could be done by recognizing that deep continuity with the past can actually maximize the possibility for significant change, and radical change turns people back into their heritage for wisdom; thus, past, present and future are integrated realities, not antithetical ones.  She recognized that dualistic thinking is a stumbling block in pursuing a maximum of educational effectiveness.[5]  Moore's concern was also to seek a more effective religious education curriculum.[6]  This is because dualistic thinking has been a hinderance in considering a comprehensive religious curriculum.

Actually, the effort to overcome dichotomous thinking in planning religious education is a long-standing task of religious education theorists in the United States.  However, in most cases, their desires have not been successful in transcending the dichotomous thinking because most of their efforts have more or less tended to emphasize one aspect and isolate others.  For example, although George Albert Coe wanted an inclusive framework in which a dichotomy between tradition and creativity is resolved, Coe's work in the first

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[5] Moore, <u>Education for Continuity and Change</u>, 14-55.

[6] Moore, <u>Education for Continuity and Change</u>, 167-88; and "Rhythmic Curriculum: Guiding an Educative Journey," essay, Oct. 1994, revision of a paper presented at Universite Catholique de Lille, France, 1994.

three decades of the twentieth century tended to lean heavily in the direction of the creative side.[7] Moore impressively concludes that the pendulum of the two sides (of a dichotomy in educational theory and practice) has continued to swing, highlighting the tension, and new questions have emerged.[8]

Long ago, D. Campbell Wyckoff said that such a dichotomous conflict in religious education had virtually ended.[9] Wyckoff's comment in 1955 does seem to be somewhat valid in terms of theory. However, such a conflict has not ended in the practical field of Christian education. A continuing dichotomy between content-centered and learner-centered education is one of the most prominent examples in the practice of religious education.

Korean-American churches are one clear case in which we can see that this dichotonomous issue is still occurring in religious practice. One of the most distinctive characteristics of Korean-American churches is that most of the churches consist of members who had various denominational backgrounds in their homeland, Korea. Concretely, some members had a conservative background in Korea, but they attend a church that is more liberal in the United States, and vice versa. In terms of religious practice, their denominational background is still a factor which brings about

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[7] Moore, Education for Continuity and Change, 17.

[8] Moore, Education for Continuity and Change, 17.

[9] D. Campbell Wyckoff, The Task of Christian Education (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1955), 130.

a congregational conflict. More specifically, some Christian educators in Korean-American churches have recognized the limitations of the indoctrination method, and they favor a learner-centered approach to Christian education. However, some other educators think that learner-centered Christian education has failed to help children encounter the core message of the Bible enough to become strong disciples of the Lord. They insist on a content-centered approach.

One of the most popular events of Korean-American churches in the Los Angeles area is the annual Bible quiz contest, which has been held by the Oriental Mission Church, one of the largest Korean-American churches. The contest is strongly memory-centered. The Board of Education of one Korean-American church decided to participate in that event, and persuaded some Sunday school students to memorize as many Bible verses as possible. One of the leaders of the Sunday school strongly objected to the participation of the Sunday school in that event, pointing out weaknesses in the memory-oriented religious education experience. One of the weaknesses which the leader mentioned was that the memory-oriented event would be so competitive that the students might experience burden through the event. However, the chair-person's response to the objecting leader was simple and firm, saying that "Anyhow, our boys and girls are living in a competitive society, and they should memorize as many verses as possible to have successful Christian lives." This kind of conflict is still difficult to resolve in Korean-American

local churches, especially in immigrant churches with church members from various denominational backgrounds. The members have radically different perspectives on religious education, especially whether it should be learner-centered or content-centered. This conflict often destroys good teamwork among the Sunday school leaders.

Smart's diagnosis of the problem in the educational situation of his day is parallel to the conflicted situation in Korean-American churches. According to Smart's description, written in 1954 before Wyckoff's book 1955, "Each of the two parties could find in the other an abundance of points of attack.... Only too often both were right in their criticisms of each other, but the antithesis had so hardened, and the parties were so completely divided."[10] This reveals that contrary to Wyckoff's conclusion, the dichotomous tendency in the theory of Christian education was still an on-going issue, I argue that it continues as an issue, even a perennial one.

One of the major goals of this dissertation is to explore the value of paradoxical synthesis as a theoretical mechanism that transcends the tension between the different elements which are regarded as mutually exclusive. Paradox means a logical contradiction or logical impossibility,[11] but a paradox also refers to the contradictions that we accept as

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[10] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 58.

[11] Robert T. Herbert, Paradox and Identity in Theology (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979), 72.

genuinely irreconcilable with the proviso that an explanation may be possible with new information.[12] In that sense, a paradox can be defined as a proposition which is seemingly self-contradictory or absurd but in reality expresses a possible truth.[13]

A paradoxical synthesis is a logical mechanism which combines different assertive propositions which are contradictory. In this dissertation, the discussion about this paradoxical synthesis is limited to the educational issue of combining the curriculum elements which are sometimes seen as mutually contradictory and beyond the possibility of synthesis. Compared to Hegelian synthesis, or the mediation of opposites,[14] a paradoxical synthesis is a non-synthetical synthesis.[15] This means that a paradoxical synthesis does not intend to soften the edges of the contradiction between two elements. Instead, it combines the contradicting elements, sharpening the contradictions, into a comprehensive framework.

In that sense, a paradoxical mechanism is a good device through which two (or more than two) elements which seem

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[12] A. David Napier, Masks, Transformation, and Paradox (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 1.

[13] "Paradox," in The Random House College Dictionary, 2nd ed.

[14] J. Heywood Thomas, Subjectivity and Paradox (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1957), 11.

[15] Frederick Sontag, A Kierkegaard Handbook (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1979), 104.

mutually exclusive can be combined in one synthetic system of religious education. For the specific purpose of this dissertation, the value and function of the paradoxical mechanism is critically explored in creating a comprehensive curriculum plan which transcends narrow curriculum ideas based on dichotomous thinking about religious education.

The two pivots of this discussion are the historical controversies over religious education curriculum and the theological understanding of human nature. The purpose of discussing the historical controversy over curriculum is to see that developing a comprehensive theory of curriculum is essential groundwork for an ideal curriculum for religious education. The anthropological discussion is to demonstrate its functional relevance to the issues of religious curriculum components. Ultimately, the purpose of this dissertation is to reveal that a paradoxical anthropology is more effective than non-paradoxical ones in creating a comprehensive curriculum. Concretely, this dissertation demonstrates the relative superiority of Smart's paradoxical anthropology to the conservative-evangelistic and progressive-liberal anthropologies, which are models without a paradoxical synthesis.

<u>Methodology</u>

In discussing the nature of Smart's educational approach, one needs to be aware that nowhere does Smart himself identify his educational approach as a paradoxical synthesis, nor has any other theorist interpreted Smart's curriculum idea as

paradoxical. The effort to identify Smart's educational idea as paradoxical is the particular task of this dissertation. We will seek answers to the following questions: What is the paradoxical tendency in Smart's understanding of human nature? What is the anthropological relevance for curriculum planning in Smart's theory? What is the superiority of Smart's understanding of human nature to others' in creating a comprehensive curriculum?

The primary methods of this dissertation include a review of curriculum literature, an analysis and comparative study of Smart's paradoxical anthropology, and a construction of curriculum theory based on Smart's anthropology. The heart of the method is the comparative study of human nature among Smart and the two extreme positions of conservative evangelistic and progressive liberal conceptions of human nature. In comparison with conservative-evangelistic and liberal-progressive approaches to anthropology and education, Smart's anthropology is demonstrated as superior for grounding a comprehensive curriculum plan for religious education.

More concretely, the writing of Jonathan Edwards and George Albert Coe will be the comparative resources in defining conservative-evangelistic and liberal-progressive trends in terms of approach to anthropology and religious education. Edwards' and Coe's theological and/or educational works appeared in different religious settings and periods of time. However, their theologies can be regarded as exemplifying two counterparts in American Protestant theology,

conservative-evangelism and liberal progressivism. Related to religious education, their anthropologies clearly show their counter-partnership, especially visible in Edwards' pessimistic and Coe's optimistic ideas of human nature.

In defining the conservative-evangelistic and liberal-progressive movements, we will consider the complexities in the two movements in order to avoid dangers of oversimplification and conceptual confusion. We will also take account of differences among those who are classified in the same group, as well as the similarities among those who are classified in different groups.

In order to avoid confusion in the actual definitions of evangelism and liberalism, this dissertation is grounded in Smart's own definitions of these two movements. Smart does not define the two movements in a systematic way; however, one is able to delineate Smart's basic ideas. The evangelism to which Smart refers indicates a Christian religious movement which was widespread in New England and closely associated with many of the Sunday schools; it emphasized human depravity and the importance of conversion in religious life.[16] Liberalism, according to Smart, is a Christian religious movement that has emphasized the doctrine of divine immanence, combining a conviction of the naturalness of Christian growth with a belief in the goodness of human nature.[17]  In this

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[16] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 52.

[17] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 58.

movement, sin has been characterized as natural impulse or as human ignorance.[18]

Smart's definitions of evangelism and liberalism provide a good mechanism to explain the contradictory religious movements in the history of American Protestantism. Since the middle of the twentieth century, and even now, a tendency has appeared to identify anthropological counterparts as liberalism and Neo-orthodoxy. This division is described by educational theorists such as John H. Westerhoff III, who served as an editor of Religious Education and as a leader in the Religious Education Association and the Association of Professors of Researchers in Religious Education.[19] However, Neo-orthodox theology is more a combination of the liberal and orthodox traditions than a counterpart to liberalism.[20] Especially in the theological setting in which conservative-evangelistic and liberal-progressive spirits are still sharply confronted with each other, as in the Korean-American churches, Neo-orthodoxy would not be the counterpart to liberalism, but the third spirit which opens a way to combine the two counterparts. In that sense, the definitions of evangelism and liberalism of this dissertation would be

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[18] James C. Logan, Theology as a Source in Shaping the Church's Educational Work (Nashville: Division of Education, Board of Discipleship, United Methodist Church, 1974), 23.

[19] John H. Westerhoff III, Will Our Children Have Faith? (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1976), 27-30.

[20] John L. Elias, Studies in Theology and Education (Malabar, Fla: Robert E. Krieger Publishing, 1986), 41.

parallel to Smart's in which evangelism, progressivism, and Neo-orthodoxy are posed in a triangular form.

Throughout this dissertation, two other concerns are added. The first concern explains the modern movement of re-conceptualizing curriculum toward more comprehensiveness. Religious curriculum theorists have attempted for a long time to create a comprehensive curriculum in its various aspects. One of these strategies is to break the narrow interpretation of the term curriculum in order to have a broader notion of it. As a result of this effort, the religious curriculum is no longer regarded as one of many items in religious education, but is regarded as the subject which covers the whole issue of religious education.

The second concern is to illustrate the effort to overcome dichotomous thinking regarding the nature of religious curriculum, such as curriculum content, age grouping principles, aims, and teaching-learning models. Concretely, these efforts are attempts to resolve the either/or tension in thinking about the curriculum emphasis: a knowledge-centered content of curriculum versus an experience-centered content; uniform versus graded curriculum resources; conversion-oriented versus growth-oriented curriculum; and transmission versus problem-solving methods.

The first part of this dissertation deals with the re-conceptualization of curriculum and the historical controversy involving the curriculum components in religious education. Those discussions are not directly related to the issue of

anthropology; however, they are valuable in discerning the historical trends and controversies regarding religious curriculum. Specifically, these discussions explain what aspects of curriculum have become major issues of controversy.

The second part of this dissertation is a discussion of Smart's understanding of human nature. The primary purpose of this portion is to demonstrate the existence of the paradoxical element in Smart's understanding of human nature. Accordingly, this discussion seeks answers to questions regarding Smart's anthropological assumptions, Smart's paradoxical thinking, and the value of Smart's paradoxical understanding of human nature for creating a comprehensive religious curriculum. Smart's understanding of human nature is compared with Jonathan Edwards' conservative evangelistic and George Albert Coe's liberal understandings.

The third and most important part of this dissertation is a demonstration of the superiority of Smart's paradoxical understanding of human nature to the other two anthropological extremes of evangelism and liberalism for creating a comprehensive curriculum. In reality, this part is a pursuit of a functional relationship between anthropology, discussed in Chapter 3, and curriculum, discussed in Chapter 2. This part also reveals possibilities and limitations in the evangelistic and liberal anthropologies for determining the nature of curriculum.

In conclusion, this dissertation will explain the value of a paradoxical mechanism in explaining Christian religious

truth, revealing the traditional value of Smart's paradoxical interpretation of human nature. Finally, Smart's synthetical approach will be valued as one of the most desirable devices to transcend the dichotomous thinking of religious education in general, and curriculum thinking in particular.

Chapter 2

The Historical Efforts for a Comprehensive Curriculum

The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate two of the most distinctive issues relating to a comprehensive curriculum plan: defining curriculum and determining the curriculum components. Concretely, the discussion of defining curriculum will describe the historical trend of reconceptualizing curriculum, focusing on an effort to overcome a narrowly conceptualized idea of curriculum. This description of reconceptualizing curriculum is to demonstrate a part of modern curriculum theorists' efforts to envision a more comprehensive curriculum idea. The discussion regarding the curriculum emphases will identify the basic principles in determining these emphases, explaining the causes which easily make thinking about curriculum components dichotomous. The basic principles which are identified in this chapter are examined in terms of the functional relationship between a curriculum and its underlying anthropology, which will be discussed in chapter three.

### Reconceptualizing Curriculum

Defining the term curriculum is one of the most long-standing issues for curriculum theorists and philosophers of education.[1] Jonas F. Soltis writes about attempts to define the term "education" as follows:

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[1] John P. Portelli, "Perspectives and Imperatives on Defining Curriculum," Journal of Curriculum and Supervision 2 (1987): 354.

> Part of the problem involved in talking
> and thinking about education is the variety
> of definitions and views of education
> offered to us on all sides.  We are literally
> bombarded with a multitude of competing
> definitions which tempts us to choose among
> them, to mix an eclectic set of fragments
> from them, or even to reject them all and
> find the "real" definition of education for
> ourselves.[2]

Drawing on Soltis, John P. Portelli says that "the situation is at least as bad for the term "curriculum.""[3]

Historically, the problem of defining curriculum has been complex.[4]  The complexity of defining curriculum is demonstrated from the fact that Ian A. C. Rule identified 119 different definitions of the term curriculum in 1973, and he could add a score of new definitions to the list later.[5]  In fact, the complexity of curriculum has been a stumbling block in creating a clear definition of curriculum.

Initially, the word "curriculum" is derived from the Latin verb currere, which means "to run."[6]  In ancient Rome, this word referred to "running on a racecourse."[7]  In literal

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[2] Jonas F. Soltis, An Introduction to the Analysis of Educational Concepts, 2nd ed. (Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley Publishing, 1978), 7.

[3] Portelli, "Perspectives and Imperatives," 357.

[4] See Portelli, "Perspectives and Imperatives," 357.

[5] Portelli, "Perspectives and Imperatives," 357.

[6] Howard P. Colson and Raymond M. Rigdon, Understanding Your Church's Curriculum (Nashville: Broadmann Press, 1969), 38.

[7] Ronald P. Chadwick, Teaching and Learning (Old Tappan, N.J.: Fleming H. Revell, 1982), 82.

terms, a curriculum is a course to be run.[8] This literal notion of the course is metaphorically widened to "a course of study or training, as at a school or university."[9] For a long time, curriculum has been associated largely with these notions. However, the meanings of curriculum have not been limited to the notion of subject matter. Throughout the last several decades, many scholars have challenged the narrow definitions of curriculum and tried to reclaim its comprehensive meanings.[10]

Portelli explains that the reason for the complexity in definitions of curriculum is the fact that the term "curriculum" itself involves various elements, which a definition cannot capture fully.[11] As will be discussed, it ranges from printed materials for a lesson to a whole set of experiences in an educational context. Then, Portelli argues, "Simplistic answers to the question 'What is curriculum?' will be misleading, for such answers will not capture the complexity of the notion."[12] This means that a simplistic definition of curriculum might present a false or incomplete picture of curriculum either by stressing one characteristic

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[8] Maria Harris, <u>Fashion Me a People</u> (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1989), 55.

[9] Harris, 55.

[10] Harris, 59.

[11] Portelli, "Perspectives and Imperatives," 363.

[12] Portelli, "Perspectives and Imperatives," 366.

to the exclusion of others or by identifying curriculum with only one aspect.[13]  Similarly, Le Roi Daniels and Jerrold Coombs also point out that most of the definitions tend to distort the concept of curriculum partly because most of the definitions capture only one of the various characteristics of curriculum, as fixed materials, as an experience under guidance, or as an open experience.[14]

These recognitions of the limitations of narrow definitions of curriculum have resulted in various new interpretations of curriculum.  The book Foundations for Teaching and Learning, which explains biblical, theological, and educational foundations of Christian education in the United Methodist Church, reads:

> The term "curriculum" is understood in
> many ways.  Some say that curriculum is
> everything that happens to the learner,
> planned and unplanned.  Others say it is the
> material that is to be taught.  Still others
> say it is a series of experiences and
> activities which the learners should have in
> order to solve problems and grow.[15]

Donald E. Miller has a more detailed explanation of the trends of curriculum theorists' various re-conceptualizations

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[13] Portelli, "Perspectives and Imperatives," 366.

[14] Le Roi Daniel and Jerrold Coombs, "The Concept of Curriculum," in Philosophy of Education, eds. Donald B. Cochrane and Martin Schiralli (Don Mills: Collier Macmillan, Canada, 1982), 251.

[15] United Methodist Church, Board of Discipleship, Division of Education, Foundations for Teaching and Learning in the United Methodist Church (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1979), 77.

of curriculum in relating to religious education.   Miller

explains,

> The narrowest [curriculum] for religious
> education is, (1) the biblical passage to be
> studied.  Larger is (2) the printed material
> being used as a guide and aid to study.  A
> still larger view includes (3) all the lesson
> resources, materials, student experiences, and
> the total teaching plan.  Broadest of all is
> the view that (4)curriculum is the total set
> of activities, relationships, and resources
> that give shape to a community's educative
> structure.[16]

According to the narrow definitions of curriculum,

curriculum is identified with the printed material and nothing

more.[17]   In the early nineteenth century, curriculum was

widely defined as a product for a course of study or training.

At that time, curriculum was equated with the content of

textbooks, course outlines, teacher guides, or other finished

products of study.[18]   James Donald Butler maintains that a

narrow definition equates curriculum in Christian education

with a study of literature.[19]

Historically, the narrow definition of curriculum as the

product or materials for teaching was broken when Hollis L.

Caswell and Doak S. Campbell acknowledged the socializing

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[16] Donald E. Miller, _Story and Context_ (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987), 294.

[17] Harris, 58.

[18] Samuel K. Joseph, "Curriculum Philosophy of Education and the Jewish Religious School," _Religious Education_ 78 (1983):193.

[19] James Donald Butler, _Religious Education_ (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 264.

function of the schooling process in 1935. According to them, the curriculum is composed of all the experiences which learners have under the guidance of the teacher.[20] In other words, curriculum is a sequence of potential experiences which is set up in the school for the purpose of disciplining learners in group ways of thinking and acting.[21]

By the 1950s it became increasingly evident that schools had a tremendous influence on learners' lives. Accordingly, the curriculum was understood as all the learning of learners which is planned by and directed by the school to attain its educational goals.[22] In the 1960s and 1970s, there was a rising interest in the performance of educational programs. According to this focus, the definition of curriculum is pushed toward an emphasis on results and ends.[23] In short, curriculum is concerned not with what students will do in the learning situation, but with what they will learn as a consequence of what they do.[24] From this perspective above, Daniel Tanner defines that curriculum is the planned and

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[20] Hollis L. Caswell and Doak S. Campbell, _Curriculum Development_ (New York: American Book Co., 1935), 66.

[21] B. Othanel Smith, _Fundamentals of Curriculum Development_ (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1957), 3.

[22] Ralph W. Tyler, _The Curriculum Then and Now_ (Princeton: Educational Testing Service, 1957), 79, as cited in Samuel .K Joseph, "Curriculum Philosophy of Education and the Jewish Religious Education."

[23] Joseph, 194-95.

[24] Joseph, 195.

guided learning experiences and intended outcomes, formulated
through systematic reconstruction of knowledge and experience,
under the auspices of the school, for the learner's continuous
and willful growth in personal-social competence.[25]

As such, the broad idea of curriculum identifies all
experience itself with curriculum.    In other words, the
curriculum is constituted by all of those influences and media
of communication by which the learners are nurtured in the
culture of community of which they are a part.[26]    As such,
according to this broader notion of curriculum, the curriculum
becomes the whole plan for learning.

Maria Harris is one of the persons who favors a broad
definition of the curriculum.    In examining the multiple
meanings of curriculum, Harris argues: "[C]hurches are
returning to the practice of seeing all the aspects of church
life as educative and educating and thus part of
curriculum."[27]    Thus, Harris emphasizes the importance of
breaking out of the limited and limiting definitions of
curriculum.    Responding to narrowly conceptualized religious
curriculum, Harris writes:

>         Printed resources that serve this
> wider curriculum are in the treasury of
> the church, especially the comprehensive
> curricula materials designed over the last

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[25] Daniel Tanner, _Curriculum Development_ (New York:
Macmillan Publishing, 1975), 45.

[26] Butler, 262-63.

[27] Harris, 59.

century in the United States. These,
however, are not the curriculum. The
curriculum is both more basic and more
profound. It is the entire course of the
church's life, found in the fundamental
forms of that life.[28]

As such, in Harris' thought, the conception of religious
education curriculum is broadened to include all activities
and experiences of the church's life.

Saying in the extreme way that the curriculum cannot be
purchased, Norma J. Everist expands the notion of curriculum
even to God: "The curriculum is God and God's people gathered
together at a certain place and time in history. All else is
resource. A congregation has a life and mission of its own.
The people are the primary resource."[29] Everist's definition
of curriculum shows an example through which the narrowly
defined conception of religious curriculum is radically
broadened.

Behind attempts to widen the notion of curriculum, some
other curriculum theorists are concerned about a possible
chaotic situation due to indiscriminate expansion of the
notion of curriculum. The concern about this chaos in
defining curriculum began in earlier years, at least fifty
years ago in the United States. Paul H. Vieth, who was
Executive Director for curriculum development of the

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[28] Harris, 63.

[29] Norma J. Everist, <u>Education Ministry in the
Congregation</u> (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1983),
13.

International Council of Religious Education and Director of the Religious Film Association, is among those religious educators who were deeply concerned about the possible chaos in curriculum definition. Vieth identifies three categories of curriculum conceptions: the broadest one, the narrow one, and a more balanced one between the two.[30]

According to Vieth, the narrow idea of curriculum limits the curriculum to the prepared materials for use in the church's educational program such as books for teachers and learners, periodicals, pictures, hymns and music, slides and motion pictures. The term "lesson materials" is often used to describe these materials.[31] The opposite to this narrow definition is the idea that all life is the curriculum in the broadest sense.[32] Vieth interprets that this broadest idea of curriculum is based on the idea that there is no experience which does not have an influence on what people become.[33] According to this broadest idea of curriculum, because religion is concerned with all phases of life, most of life's experience may be thought of as the religious curriculum. This broad conception of curriculum includes even the temper and life of the home, the life of the church, the life of the

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[30] Paul H. Vieth, "The Curriculum of Christian Education," in The Church and Christian Education, ed. Paul H. Vieth (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1947), 134-36.

[31] Vieth, "Curriculum of Christian Education," 135.

[32] Vieth, "Curriculum of Christian Education," 134.

[33] Vieth, "Curriculum of Christian Education," 134.

surrounding community with all of its tributary institutions,
and every last significant contact which the individual
makes.[34] However, Vieth thinks that this idea of curriculum
is too broad for practical purposes.

Vieth, therefore, seeks for a more proper conception of
curriculum which is something tangible.[35] Vieth proposes a
more balanced notion of curriculum, embracing the conscious
efforts of the educational leaders in the church to help its
learners to put their lives under the guidance and control of
the Christian gospel. The balanced curriculum, as defined by
Vieth, includes all those activities and experiences.

> It is more than a set of text-books or
> lesson materials. It is more than a body of
> knowledge set out to be learned. It
> comprehends the entire range of conditions,
> activities and experiences by which a church
> seeks to achieve its educational ends. It
> is life, not a printed page.[36]

As Vieth amplifies these ideas in the work he did with a team
of the International Council of Religious Education, he adds
that a proper definition of curriculum should include all of
the activities and experience which are initiated or utilized
by the educational leaders of the church for the achievement
of the aims of Christian education.[37]

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[34] Vieth, "Curriculum of Christian Education," 134.

[35] Vieth, "Curriculum of Christian Education," 134-36.

[36] Paul H. Vieth, "The Content of the Curriculum,"
Religious Education 47 (1952): 307.

[37] Vieth, "Content of the Curriculum," 134-35.

Donald E. Miller also favors the more balanced definition of curriculum. According to Miller, a curriculum contains the overall design, round of activities, planned experiences, and subject matter to be followed in a course of study, or collectively in all of these.[38] However, in Miller's thought, curriculum does not contain all activities or experiences. The experiences or knowledge described as curriculum need to be confined to those which are chosen for an educational context.[39]

D. Campbell Wyckoff, a longtime professor of Christian Education of Princeton Theological Seminary and an active consultant in curriculum design for various Presbyterian and ecumenical agencies and boards, also has a strong proposal for the balanced definition of curriculum. Wyckoff makes the careful distinction between curriculum and curriculum materials. The curriculum, for Wyckoff, means the educational plan, whereas curriculum materials mean the resources and suggestions that are published or otherwise provided, from which that educational plan may be built in the local congregation and in the home.[40] Curriculum, for Wyckoff, is experience, which includes the entire life situation. However, the experiences are confined to those which are under

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[38] Donald Miller, 293.

[39] Donald Miller, 293-94.

[40] D. Campbell Wyckoff, "The Curriculum and the Church School," in <u>Religious Education</u>, ed. Marvin J. Taylor (New York: Abingdon Press, 1960), 101.

guidance toward the fulfillment of the purposes of Christian education. This means that, for Wyckoff, the experiences which are appropriate to the religious curriculum are parts of the entire life situation which are consciously planned, not the entire life situation within which the person acts and with which learners are interacting.[41]

Although some theorists pursue a more balanced definition of curriculum, it is clear that many curriculum theorists attempt to reclaim curriculum toward more comprehensiveness. Recent discussions of hidden curriculum and null curriculum have also greatly influenced theorists who want to reclaim the curriculum in a broader direction. In his book, The Educational Imagination, explaining that schools teach more and less than they intend to teach, Elliot W. Eisner, a professor in the Education Department at Stanford University, separates curriculum into three types according to its function: explicit, implicit, and null.[42] The explicit curriculum refers to what is offered to the students with publicly explicit goals and intentions.[43] The implicit curriculum and null curriculum are the curricula beyond the explicit curriculum. About the explicit curriculum, Eisner

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[41] D. Campbell Wyckoff, Theory and Design of Christian Education Curriculum (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961), 27.

[42] Elliot W. Eisner, The Educational Imagination (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1994), 87-107.

[43] Eisner, 87.

writes:

> [T]hese goals appear in school
> district curriculum guides and the
> course-planning materials that teachers
> are asked to prepare; the public also
> knows that theses courses are offered
> and that students in the district will have
> the opportunity to achieve these aims, at
> least to some degree, should they want to
> do so.[44]

The term "hidden curriculum" is relatively new in curriculum discourse. This term was first employed in the late 1960s.[45] There are many other expressions for the hidden curriculum: the unstudied curriculum, the implicit curriculum, the invisible curriculum, the unwritten curriculum, the covert curriculum, the latent curriculum, the silent curriculum, the by-products of schooling and what schooling does to people.[46] This notion of hidden curriculum is based on the idea that schools undoubtedly do influence learners in more ways than by overtly instructing them or otherwise consciously teaching them.[47]

Eisner argues that what schools teach are more than what schools teach in this explicit-advertised menu.[48] Eisner names the other curriculum the implicit or hidden curriculum.

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[44] Eisner, 88.

[45] John P. Portelli, "Exposing the Hidden Curriculum," Journal of Curriculum Studies 25 (1993): 343.

[46] Portelli, "Exposing the Hidden Curriculum," 344.

[47] Portelli, "Exposing the Hidden Curriculum," 345.

[48] Eisner, 88.

The implicit curriculum forms no formal part of curriculum, but this curriculum is taught in school.[49] Eisner even argues that the implicit curriculum might be profoundly more powerful and longer lasting than what is intentionally taught or what the explicit curriculum of the school publicly provides.[50]

Various other meanings have been attached to the hidden curriculum by curriculum theorists. John P. Portelli introduces four major meanings of the hidden curriculum. First, the hidden curriculum is the unofficial expectations, or implicit but expected messages. Second, the hidden curriculum is unintended learning outcomes or messages. Third, the hidden curriculum is implicit messages arising from the structure of schooling. Fourth, the hidden curriculum is created by the students.[51]

Philip W. Jackson, who was a Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, talks about this notion of hidden curriculum in terms of the unnoticed aspects of school life. Jackson contrasts the demands created by the features of this hidden curriculum with the academic demands of the official curriculum to which educators traditionally

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[49] Eisner, 93-95.

[50] Eisner, 88.

[51] Portelli, "Exposing the Hidden Curriculum," 345.

have paid the most attention.[52]  Jackson refers to three particular facts of life found in schools.  Those are the system of crowds, praise and power.  According to Jackson, these three factors give rise to norms and values which collectively form a hidden curriculum.  According to Jackson, each learner and teacher must master a hidden curriculum if they are to make their ways satisfactorily through the school.[53]  Drawing from Jackson, Portelli claims that the main characteristic of the hidden curriculum is the fact that it is the sum total of unofficial institutional expectations, values and norms aimed at by educational administrators and teachers.  The elements in the hidden curriculum are initially completely unknown to the learners.  It can also be hidden if it is unnoticed by those directing the schooling process.[54]

Another characteristic of the hidden curriculum comes from the fact that the hidden curriculum creates unintended learning outcomes.  Educationists such as J. R. Martin, D. Gordon, F. M. Connelly and D. J. Clandinin have focused on unintended outcomes or messages.[55]  Martin E. Dale claims

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[52] Philip W. Jackson, Life in Classrooms (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1968), 34.

[53] Jackson, 33-34.

[54] Portelli, "Exposing the Hidden Curriculum," 345.

[55] See J. R. Martin, "What Should We Do with a Hidden Curriculum When We Find One?," Curriculum Inquiry 6 (1976): 135-51; D. Gordon, "The Concept of the Hidden Curriculum," Journal of Philosophy of Education 16 (1982): 187-98; and F. Michael Connelly and D. Jean Clandinin, Teachers as Curriculum Planners (New York: Teachers College

that even the most mundane of activities are often accompanied by unintended consequences.[56] Drawing from Dale, Portelli concludes that these unintended outcomes or messages may never be recognized or identified, and even if they are they may not be formally acknowledged.[57]

Ivan Illich, who obtained degrees in history, philosophy, and theology and served as a parish priest in an Irish-Puerto Rican neighborhood in New York, mentions the notion of hidden curriculum, focusing on the impact of the invariant structure of the school. According to Illich, the hidden curriculum has the undesirable latent functions of compulsory schools.[58] Illich distinguishes learning from schooling. This distinction means a separation of the teacher's goal from the impact of the structure of the school. In Illich's thought, this hidden structure is not officially recognized, and it constitutes a course of instruction that remains forever beyond the control of the teacher or of the school board.[59]

According to Illich, this hidden curriculum conveys the message that only through schooling can an individual prepare

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Press, Columbia University; Toronto: Oise Press, 1988): 154-56.

[56] Martin E. Dale, "Intentional Explanations and Radical Theories of Education," Studies in Philosophy and Education 10 (1990):191.

[57] Portelli, "Exposing the Hidden Curriculum," 346.

[58] Ivan Illich, Toward a History of Needs (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 68.

[59] Illich, 70.

for adulthood in society. Furthermore, this hidden curriculum makes the learners think that what is not taught in school is of little value, and that what is learned outside school is not worth knowing.[60] Illich writes,

> What is important in the hidden curriculum is that students learn that education is valuable when it is acquired in the school through a graded process of consumption; that the degree of success the individual will enjoy in society depend on the amount of learning he [she] consumes; and that learning about the world is more valuable than learning from the world.[61]

Drawing from Eisner, Maria Harris translates the notion of implicit curriculum into religious education. According to Harris, the implicit curriculum is the patterns or organization or procedures that frame the explicit curriculum. Concretely, the implicit curriculum contains things like attitudes or time spent or even the design of a room. In addition, the implicit curriculum refers to the presence or absence of teenagers on our parish councils and the percentage of church revenues we give or do not give to people who are less fortunate.[62]

The idea of null curriculum goes to a deeper dimension of curriculum reconceptualization. Eisner first introduces the idea of null curriculum in an analysis of the way curriculum functions. In thinking about the null curriculum, Eisner

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[60] Illich, 70.

[61] Illich, 71.

[62] Harris, 68-69.

assumes that what schools do not teach may be as important as what they do teach.[63] For Eisner, in the field of education, ignorance is not simply a neutral void. This means that something which is ignored in an educational practice might have important effects on the kinds of options one is able to consider, the alternatives that one can examine, and the perspectives from which one can view a situation or problems.[64]

Harris explains that the null curriculum is a paradox in the sense that this curriculum exists because it does not exist. In fact, this curriculum is what is left out. But the idea of null curriculum is that ignorance or the absence of something is not neutral. According to Harris, this null curriculum includes areas left out (content, themes, points of view) and the procedures left unused (the arts, play, critical analysis).[65]

As such, the null curriculum can be identified as the options learners are not afforded. In addition, the null curriculum is identified as the perspectives learners may never know about, much less be able to use, the concepts and skills that are not a part of their intellectual repertoire.[66] From that view, Eisner concludes that in the

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[63] Eisner, 97.

[64] Eisner, 97.

[65] Harris, 69.

[66] Eisner, 106-07.

deliberations that constitute the course of living, their absence will have important consequences on the kind of life that learners can choose to lead.[67]

In closing the discussion of curriculum theorists' efforts to reclaim a broad definition of curriculum, a tension between narrowly oriented and broadly oriented curriculum is clearly recognized. The real problem of the broad definition of curriculum is a lack of precision. This is because the broad definitions tend not to distinguish between religious education and curriculum, between instruction and curriculum, or between curriculum and learning.[68] On the other hand, the narrow definition of curriculum tends to isolate important elements of educational practice in order to establish a precise notion of curriculum. In light of this discussion, the identification of a more sound definition of curriculum will have to be considered in order to create a comprehensive religious curriculum which is broad enough, yet not chaotic.

In defining an ideal and practical religious curriculum, we need to define curriculum in a tensional framework-- Curriculum is to be precise but not too narrow, and to be broad but not too chaotic. This tensional framework provides a helpful mechanism which overcomes the extreme curriculum ideas--a narrow identification of curriculum with curriculum

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[67] Eisner, 107.

[68] Mary Jo Osterman, "The Two Hundred Year Struggle for Protestant Religious Education Curriculum Theory," Religious Education 75 (1980): 538.

resources or materials and an unlimited expansion of curriculum to all life experience. Also, curriculum will be more than curriculum resources or materials and should contain a consideration of the significance of life experience in educational context. On the other hand, curriculum will be less than the entire scope of life experience, and should be under the control or guidance of educational practitioners. In short, we would define curriculum as a planned organization of educational resources, which includes traditional wisdom accumulated throughout history (the past) and imaginal wisdom expected or hoped in the actual process of education (the future).

### Controversy Regarding Curriculum Resource Design

Throughout the history of religious education, curriculum theorists have projected a variety of issues related to curriculum resource design. Among those issues, the struggles to define the nature of content, age-grouping principles, aims, and teaching-learning models of curriculum have been the most intense as theorists attempt to resolve the curriculum controversy.[69] We will focus on these four curriculum issues here in order to define the functional relationship between anthropology and the nature of religious curriculum. Before discussing the four issues, we will describe the two different trends in envisioning religious education through illustrating two examples of curriculum materials, ie., the catechetical

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[69] Osterman, 528.

style curriculum resources and the graded Bible study materials.

## The Two Comparative Curriculum Materials

One of the easiest ways to exemplify the different trends of curriculum in religious education design is to compare the different characteristics of the catechetical curriculum materials and the graded Bible study materials. We cannot say that educationally, these two have always been antithetical. However, when considered as religious curriculum resources, the two kinds of material give clear examples of the tensions at the heart of the historical controversy regarding religious curriculum design. Concretely, the catechism materials used in the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries and the graded curricula developed in the early twentieth century in the United States are good comparative examples.

Traditionally, the catechetical materials are often identified as knowledge-centered religious curriculum resources in terms of content. These materials are also regarded as an example of memory-centered resources. In addition, they have generally been based in uniform, conversion-centered curriculum principles. The Westminster Shorter Catechism, which was composed by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster in 1648, is a typical example of the catechetical curriculum material of Sunday schools in the United States.

The Shorter Catechism is filled with such questions and

answers as "What is the chief end of man [humanity]?" and "The
chief end of man [humanity] is to glorify God and to enjoy him
[God] forever.";[70] "What rule has God given to direct us how
we may glorify and enjoy him [God]?" and "The word of God,
which is contained in the scriptures of the Old and New
Testaments, is the only rule to direct us, how we may glorify
and enjoy him [God]."[71] Educationally, this catechism is so
knowledge-centered that the child's creative participation
with his or her own interests, needs or motives is almost
ignored in educational practice.

The Closely Graded Courses, published in the early
twentieth century by the International Council of Religious
Education, can be regarded as a counterpart to the
catechetical curriculum materials in terms of curriculum
content and design. A teacher's text book of this series,
published in 1928, clearly shows that this curriculum material
strongly favors the learner's religious experience as the
central concern. This book reads:

> The Closely Graded Course are intended
> to stimulate and guide the developing
> religious experience of children and young
> people in such a way that they shall (1)
> discover and realize for themselves the
> Christian Way of Life and (2) attain unto
> that measure of spiritual growth which
> belongs to each state of normal development

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[70] James Fisher, The Westminster Assembly's Shorter
Catechism Explained, by Way of Question and Answer
(Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication,
1765), 9.

[71] Fisher, 14.

in Christian character and to effectiveness
of Christian conduct in all the relationship
of life.[72]

Hero Stories, a book for junior class pupils of this series, illustrates the learner-centered characteristic of these materials. Actually, each session of the pupil's book opens with a daily-life story. The story facilitates the learner's interest in some aspect of daily life. The story is later connected to some biblical stories or passages. The lesson then presents some biblical verses to memorize, and questions for the learners to answer. The lesson also presents homework during weekdays. As such, this graded curriculum is a good example of the material which has great respect for the child's daily life experience.

In terms of age grading principles, traditionally, the catechetical curriculum material has tended to be regarded as a uniform-favored one. However, since long ago, the catechetical materials have often been adopted for children pedagogically. In fact, the Westminster Shorter Catechism has been adopted into a new volume called The Child's Book on the Westminster Shorter Catechism. Basically, the newly adopted volume is to provide an easy introduction, and help for understanding the Shorter Catechism.[73] However, the primary

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[72] Josephine L. Baldwin, Hero Stories and Being Heroic, Course 5, pt. 1, Teacher's Text Book, Junior (New York: Graded Press, 1928), 3.

[73] Frank Glenn Lankard, A History of the American Sunday School Curriculum (New York: Abingdon Press, 1927), 101.

aim of this adapted volume is to aid in the memorization of the Shorter Catechism rather than to respect the child's development of religious needs, interests, or motives.

Unlike the catechetical curriculum material, the graded curriculum materials, such as the International Closely Graded Lessons presented by the International Lesson Committee in the early twentieth century, was developed with a thorough consideration of the child's spiritual needs and growth in each stage of his or her development.[74] For example, the Primary Department of the International Graded Series had a different approach to understanding God in each year. For the first year of the primary department, this material shows forth God's power, love, and care to awaken within the child responsive love, trust, and obedience. For the second year, this curriculum, builds on the teachings of the first year, by showing ways to express their love, trust, and obedience. In addition, this material shows Jesus the Savior in his love and work for people, and also shows how helpers of Jesus learn to do God's will. For the third year, this material builds on the teachings of the first and second years by telling about people who chose to do God's will; by describing how Jesus, by his life and words, death and resurrection, revealed God's love and will for us; and by telling stories that will appeal to the child and arouse within him or her a desire to choose

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[74] Lankard, 286-88.

and to do that which God requires of him or her.[75] As such, basically the graded curriculum materials have been developed with great concern for the child's development.

In terms of educational aims, the catechetical curriculum materials and the graded materials mentioned above, both being used in the early twentieth century, have often been regarded as counterparts to each other. As shown previously, the primary aim of the catechetical material has been to provide doctrinal or Biblical knowledge in the child in order for him or her to prepare for [or have] a good relationship with God. The comparison between the Westminster Shorter Catechism and the Closely Graded Courses contrasts conversion-oriented curriculum resources and self-realization-oriented ones. Actually, as shown before, the Shorter Catechism consists of doctrinal questions and those answers to the questions, whereas the Closely Graded Courses curriculum material basically attempts to present opportunities to meet the child's needs, interests, and capacities through connecting the lesson with a life situation of the child. Of course, the doctrinal questions and answers might also relate to the child's self-realization and spiritual growth; however, unlike the closely graded courses, the catechetical curriculum material basically attempts to instruct children in religious truths and duties.

Traditionally, the catechetical curriculum materials have

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[75] Lankard, 289-90.

been identified as a typical case of indoctrination and memory-orientation in terms of teaching-learning methods. As we can see through the actual content of the catechetical materials, the basic teaching-learning method is memorizing the catechetical content, allowing no freedom of thought, expression, or development.[76] On the other hand, graded curriculum materials did not ignore the value of memory method. In fact, the Closely Graded Courses contain verses to memorize.[77] Even so, the teaching-learning method of the graded curriculum materials is basically grounded in learner-centered plans, such as activities, class discussion, and conversation through which the child can freely participate in the learning process.

Controversies Regarding Content

First, the issue of the content of curriculum resources involves the tension between the demands of the content to be taught and the requirements of the learner in curriculum planning. This tension comes from the fact that these elements are inseparable in creating a religious curriculum. According to Wyckoff, this tension (between the demands of the faith and church on one hand and the requirements and situation of the learner on the other) exists in all aspects

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[76] Lankard, 76.

[77] Mary Alice Jones, Jesus and His Helpers, Course 6, pt. 1, Teacher's Text Book, Junior (New York: Graded Press, 1928), 25.

of religious education.[78]  This tension is more specifically revealed in the curriculum resource controversy for Christian education.

In the history of religious education in the United States, the effort to identify the content to be studied emerged first of all as a question about the kind of knowledge to be taught-- either doctrine or scripture.[79]  Doctrinal knowledge was widely taught to children through a catechetical method throughout Christian education history.  Basically, the catechetical method represents a system of teaching which employs question and answer.[80]  The content of the catechisms has varied according to the varying theological and doctrinal interpretations of Christian truth and the varying demands of different periods in the development of religious thought.[81] The catechisms have contained the statements of creed, or belief, which were emphasized by churches and parents as a necessary part of the religious equipment of childhood and youth.  More concretely, the catechisms have treated issues related to the Bible, trinity, sacraments, and other important doctrines, such as works of providence, the human fall, the redemption of Jesus, justification, adoption, the Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer.  Furthermore, some

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[78] Wyckoff, Theory and Design, 140.

[79] Osterman, 530.

[80] Lankard, 68.

[81] Lankard, 68.

catechisms have dealt also with the religious, political, and social duties.[82]

In the Unitied States, as the newly forming American Sunday School concentrated on religious instruction in the late 1700s, the content to be studied was given priority in a knowledge-centered curriculum. More especially, the knowledge was closely related with religious doctrines at that time.[83] Specifically, during the years 1790-1815, the catechism held the center of attention in the American Sunday School.[84] This means that during that period doctrinal knowledge was the primary curriculum content available to the Sunday School.[85] During the first quarter of the nineteenth century, among the catechisms, The Westminster Shorter Catechism, The Catechisms of Isaac Watts, Luther's Small Catechism, The Heidelberg Catechism, and The Methodist Catechisms were representative.[86]

In the early 1880s, curriculum content shifted from doctrinal catechisms to the scriptures, according to the influence of the evangelical revival, especially the Wesleyan Revival.[87] Early in the "Scriptural Period" (1815-1835),[88]

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[82] Lankard, 72-89.

[83] Osterman, 530.

[84] Lankard, 71.

[85] Lankard, 68-98.

[86] Lankard, 68-98.

[87] Osterman, 530.

some passages of scripture were selected at random by students and committed to memory. However, this method proved ineffective, and various persons and groups prepared and distributed selected scriptural passages for study and memorization for the children.[88]

The years from 1835 or 1840 to 1872 in the history of American Sunday-school curriculum are usually referred to as the "Babel Period."[90] We call this period Babel because the situation of curriculum among Protestant churches was chaotic. Lankard explains several factors which caused the chaotic situation. The main cause among them was a considerable reaction against the Selected Scripture System, as contained in the Union Question Book, and the rise of a more definite Sunday-school consciousness of the various denominations. Several denominations were forming a denominational union, and issued their own lesson plans. In addition, private publishers competed with the Sunday School Union and the denominational publishing houses in placing their rival

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[88] In relating the distinctive terms of the kind of curriculum resources produced, Mary Jo Osterman divides the era of the American Protestant curriculum development into eight periods: (1) the Doctrinal Period (1785-1815), (2) the Scripture Period (1815-1835), (3) the Babel Period (1835-1872), (4) the Uniform Lesson Period (1872-1908), (5) the Graded Period (1908-1932), (6) the Curriculum Guide Period (1932-1955), (7) the Curriculum Plan Period (1955-1968), (8) the Babel II Period (1968-present). See Osterman, 529-30. (This article was written in 1980.)

[89] Lankard, chap. 4.

[90] Henry F. Cope, The Evolution of the Sunday School (New York: Eaton & Mains, 1911), 103.

schemes on their market. As a result, various systems sprang up, independent lessons took the field, denominational presses attempted to serve their pupils. The result of all this was confusion and lack of unity. The period has thus been called "Babel."[91]

The effort to identify the nature of content intensified in the "Babel Period" of curriculum development. The curriculum consisted for the most part of random passages from the Bible and of denominational catechisms, and the method was almost wholly memoriter.[92] This chaotic situation was not reduced until 1869 when the National Sunday School Convention appointed a committee to prepare a lesson system that followed a uniform lesson scheme.[93]

Doctrinal catechisms enjoyed a brief revival and competed with various lists of selected scriptures. The Verse-A-Day Plan was popular in the "Babel Period." However, this "Babel Period" ended with the development of the Uniform Lesson Series and a decisive move toward scripture as the content of religious education curriculum.[94] The primary intention of this uniform lesson period was to prepare for the type of lesson in which the same text was studied by all ages,

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[91] Lankard, 179.

[92] William Clayton Bower and Percy Roy Hayward, Protestantism Faces Its Educational Task Together (Appleton, Wis.: C. C. Nelson Publishing, 1949), 67.

[93] Bower and Hayward, 67.

[94] Osterman, 531.

children and adults, on a given Sunday.[95]

The adaptation of the uniform lessons marked a great advance in the curriculum work of the Sunday school. A clear advance is felt in that the uniform lessons made possible a serious and systematic study of the Bible. The uniform lessons focused attention upon the Bible as a definite content and arranged the biblical subject-matter in a continuous and cumulative series of lessons. Thus, the uniform lessons set in a definite time schedule. This meant that a common theme, a common memory passage, and a common portion of the Scripture served to provide a shared experience for the local church and made possible the systematic cultivation of family devotions through daily Bible readings.[96]

The assumption that content is equated with information or cognitive knowledge was challenged at the beginning of the twentieth century, and the struggle broadened into a controversy of content-as-knowledge versus content-as experience-under-guidance.[97] This means that curriculum, which had been equated with content as knowledge, was redefined as "enriched and controlled experience" or "experience under intelligent and purposive control."[98] This is because new understandings of child development and John

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[95] Lankard, 201.

[96] Bower and Hayward, 68.

[97] Osterman, 530.

[98] Osterman, 531.

Dewey's experiential approach to education began to exert heavy influence on curriculum developers.[99] As a result, a concrete movement developed to broaden the understanding of curriculum content to include the learners' life situations and experiences. The curriculum publishers began their series by focusing on the children's needs and interests, and they placed the child at the center of the teaching-learning-process in their series.[100]

The effort to identify the content of religious education curriculum resources has continued to the present day. In the "Curriculum Plan Period" (1955-1968), according to Mary Jo Osterman, the curriculum concept is refined to include the sum of learning experience within the entire plan. However, the nature of the curriculum content continues to be knowledge-content. The knowledge is primarily biblical in nature and secondarily theological or doctrinal in nature.[101]

Recent trends in considering the content of curriculum materials tend to be more complicated, directing toward a combination of the two different orientations of curriculum content. Concretely, the content of most curriculum materials provided in the 1980s and 1990s tends not to lean exclusively on any one of the two orientations. This means that the content of recent curriculum materials contains both

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[99] Osterman, 531.

[100] Osterman, 532.

[101] Osterman, 532.

orientations in a balance, biblical-doctrinal knowledge and learner's life experience. The recently published lectionary-centered curriculum series--such as the United Church of Canada's The Whole People of God and the United Church of Christ's Word Among Us, the United Methodist's New Invitation series, and the David C. Cook series--are good examples of this. It is interesting that even David C. Cook editors asserting that their curriculum is Bible-based, never ignore the importance of the life side of curriculum content, containing sections called "Life Need" and "Life Response" with the ones called "Bible Learning" and "Bible Application."[102] Differences still exist but they are more subtle than in some earlier eras. For example, the question of whether life experience is the recipient of biblical wisdom or is itself a source of wisdom is variously answered. Also questions are raised about interpreting the Bible in relation to later church traditions and contemporary life; about focusing on individual and/or societal experience; about teaching the Bible as a book of answers or a book that continues to raise questions. Thus, curriculum content has been identified variously: knowledge-centered, experience-centered, or some kind of combination. Even that delineation does not exhaust the complexity, however, and the questions persist.

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[102] Bible in Life, Teacher's Guide for Primary-Junior, Sept-Nov, 1992 (Elgin, Ill: David C. Cook, 1992).

## Controversies Regarding Age Grouping

The second major religious curriculum component is age grouping, and the major question has been whether curriculum resources should be uniform or graded. Educationally, this issue of curriculum grouping is usually related to the learners' ability to understand the curriculum content in religious education. The early dissatisfaction with the uniform concept of religious curriculum focused largely on the inappropriateness of certain resources for younger children. Later, the dissatisfaction spread to the adult level as well.[103]

The beginnings of the struggles between uniformity and grading appeared in the earliest years of modern Protestant curriculum development.[104] Early theologians such as Martin Luther and John Wesley were among those who recognized that Christian doctrines were too abstract for children to grasp. The need for grading materials for religious education arose when practitioners of religious education realized the children's difficulties in understanding the content to be taught. Realizing this, Wesley published a little book entitled Instruction for Children in London in 1745. Wesley later published the Lessons for Children catechism in four parts, the second edition appearing in 1816.[105] In most

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[103] Lankard, 273-74.

[104] Osterman, 533.

[105] Lankard, 95.

cases, the grading of doctrinal content was to simplify the ideas for the younger child and perhaps limit the numbers of ideas learned.[106]

The catechisms which were used in the early American Sunday schools show the same tendency. John Cotton, author of Milk for Babes, realized that children ought to be given materials which were different from those for adults. Joseph Sutcliffe, author of the Albion Catechism, was sympathetic to the principle of adapting materials to the needs and capacities of children.[107] The Wesleyan catechisms were widely used in America among the Methodists. In fact, the Methodists in America relied entirely upon the Wesleyan catechisms until the middle of the nineteenth century.[108] In Wesley's catechism, Number I was intended for children of tender years, Number II was for children of seven years of age and upwards. Number III assumes the form and difficulty of a formal and analytical treatise on theology and the truths of the Scripture.[109]

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the desire for uniform lessons arose in the United States as a reaction against the chaotic state of lesson materials in the so-called

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[106] Osterman, 533.

[107] Lankard, 95-96.

[108] Lankard, 96.

[109] Lankard, 96.

"Babel Series."[110] Uniformity means that the teaching material making up the lessons is uniform for all ages and grades in the school.[111] In fact, the basic desire of the uniform lessons is to have the Sunday-school world in the United States united in the study of one lesson for the whole school and the same lesson everywhere.[112] When the Sunday School was adapted to the United States from England in the nineteenth century, the leaders brought with them the catechism. The catechism was soon felt to be too narrow to be the basis for religious education. As a result, attention was turned to the Bible, great stress being placed on memorizing biblical passages.[113] These passages were selected at random, with no effort to adopt them to the understanding or needs of the learner. Under competitive stress and other forms of inducement, several hundred verses a week were sometimes committed to memory by the learners with the help of Sunday school teachers.[114]

In 1869, seeking for a remedy for the problems resulting from memory-oriented education, the National Sunday School Convention appointed a committee to prepare a uniform lesson

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[110] Arol Ayres Brown, A History of Religious Education in Recent Times (New York: Abingdon Press, 1923), 95.

[111] George Herbert Betts, "The Curriculum of Religious Education," Religious Education 15 (1920): 10.

[112] Brown, 97.

[113] Betts, 9.

[114] Betts, 9-10.

system suitable for use in any church and by all age groups in the church.[115] In 1865, under the influence of John H. Vincent, the ungraded "Uniform Lessons" were brought out, and within a short time adopted by the more important denominations in this country.[116] However, as a protest against this ungraded type of lessons, the Bible School Union, founded by Erastus Blakeslee, in 1885 published a series of graded lessons prepared by Blakeslee; and in 1908 "The International Graded Lessons" were initiated.[117]

As such, the seemingly wide-spread agreement to publish this uniform series did not halt the struggle over uniformity versus grading. Many attempts were made over the years from 1872 to 1908 to develop and promote graded materials of various kinds.[118] However, it was not until the International Lesson Committee began to publish the International Graded Lessons and then the International Closely Graded Lessons that a major shift was brought about from uniformity to grading. In 1908, in response to the demand for attention to the needs and capacities of the learner, the closely graded lessons were introduced. Group-graded lessons, based upon a three-year departmental cycle, were adopted officially in 1922, and were replaced by the

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[115] Wyckoff, Theory and Design, 32.

[116] Betts, 10.

[117] Betts, 10.

[118] Lankard, 272-322.

cycle-graded series in 1945.[119]

As indicated in the previous discussion, a few attempts at relating material to children's abilities or interests may be found in the nineteenth century Sunday School in the United States with modifications in the catechetical methods.[120] However, no comprehensive understanding of the nature of the child emerged until the twentieth century. In other words, until the twentieth century, curriculum makers did not have a deep understanding about the fact that the child was not a miniature adult, and that children required different materials as well as different treatment from adults. This means that although religious educators realized to some degree the need for adaptation and gradation of material, they could not, according to Lankard, be successful in grading doctrinal concepts so that children would respond to them.[121] As such, in the early period of Sunday School, little progress was possible in the field of religious education in terms of a curriculum grading principle.[122]

The principle of grading advanced another step in the "Scripture Period" of 1815-1835 when lesson helps known as "question books" were published for teachers. These question books accompanied the lists of selected scriptures. Although

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[119] Wyckoff, Theory and Design, 33.

[120] Lankard, chap. 4.

[121] Lankard, 97.

[122] Lankard, 97.

most of the biblical content itself remained uniform, the questions were graded either easy-hard or easy-medium-hard. Some questions required a student only to quote a verse or a passage as a correct answer. The other questions required a student to understand the meanings within the passage.[123]

The graded concept of curriculum was strengthened considerably by the newly developing experiential or progressive religious education theory in the early twentieth century. Progressive theorists called for a focus on the needs and interests of the child and a consideration of the child's ability. In curriculum development this new theory appears to have been interpreted to mean that at each age a learner has different needs and abilities, therefore, the more closely graded the curriculum materials, the better they will be.[124]

The struggle over grading or uniformity appeared to have resolved itself by the early 1920s in favor of grading, although the concept of uniformity never died out completely. However, during the Babel II Period, the issue began to re-emerge at the theoretical level as a controversy between the graded schooling and the intergenerational faith community approach to religious education. This is because new insights into the nature of religious education provided increasing

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[123] Osterman, 533.

[124] Osterman, 534.

support for the uniformity principle.[125]  Osterman writes:

> In the 1980's at least one denomination
> [the United Methodist Church] will revert
> partially to the uniformity concept in its
> children's series where all children will
> study the same basic scriptures, with
> variations in methods and additional
> scriptures for older children.  At the same
> time this series will offer helps to
> congregations to extend the children's
> materials to intergenerational experiences
> which include youth and adults.  In addition,
> a variety of locally and regionally developed
> curricula are being produced, using this
> uniformity principle.[126]

As Osterman observes, new insights from developmental theorists provided new support for the grading principle.  At the same time, other new insights into the nature of religious education, for example the intergenerationality of Christian faith, provided increasing support for the uniformity principle.[127]  As such, the tension between uniformity and grading principles in curriculum resources still continues.[128]

Some of the newer lectionary-based resources (such as Word Among Us and The Whole People of God) are attempts to provide both uniformity and grading--uniforming around lectionary texts and grading for different groups.  Perhaps the rise of such resources suggests a movement out of the

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[125] Osterman, 534.

[126] Osterman, 534-35.

[127] Osterman, 534.

[128] Osterman, 535.

Babel II Period and the emergence of a new period, which could be called the "Balancing Period."

## Controversies Regarding Aims

The third component in Protestant curriculum development is the aim or the aims of religious education. A particular tension in the aims of religious curriculum exists between conversion-oriented curriculum and a growth or self-realization-oriented one. During the Doctrinal Period of curriculum development (1785-1815), according to Osterman, the aim of religious education was to get the child right with God through study and acceptance of correct doctrine and a contact with the Divine Word. As such, in this Doctrinal Period, the ultimate aim of religious education was that children might be in a saved relationship with God for the future well-being of his soul.[129]

In the Scriptural Period (1815-1835), the aim of religious education shifted toward a right understanding of the scriptures. In the Babel Period (1835-1872) the aim of religious education reverted back to the aim which dominated the Doctrinal Period. During this period, the religious educators were primarily concerned that children should be converted and get right with God so as to secure eternal salvation. The thought prevailed that children must be prepared for the day when they would experience a divine work of grace changing their lives and leading them to make a

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[129] Osterman, 535.

decision to become a Christian.[130]

As such, this conversion-oriented definition of religious education was closely related to the fact that the chief business of the Sunday school at that time was to lead the young to a saved condition. At that time, Christian education was overshadowed by the concern of conversion and soul-saving.[131] According to this idea, the child should be acquainted with the Word of God, so, whether they engaged in indiscriminate memorization, selected lessons, or question books, all religious materials were to be centered on the Bible.[132] Joseph Emerson's statement reflects this religious atmosphere: "To know the Bible is to know God and Christ, and without the Bible, God and Christ are never known."[133] The educators were exhorted to be sure that the children mastered the biblical facts since these were of such great importance.[134] The Uniform Lesson Period (1872-1908) tried to combine both the aim of conversion to God and the aim of imparting an understanding of the Bible.[135] As such, before the Graded Period began in 1908, the major aim of religious education curriculum had mainly focused on conversion through

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[130] Lankard, 195.

[131] Lankard, 195.

[132] Lankard, 195.

[133] Lankard, 196.

[134] Lankard, 196.

[135] Lankard, 92, 153, 195-96, 242.

right understanding of doctrines and/or conversion through right understanding of the scriptures.[136]

Osterman clearly explains the situation of the twentieth century in terms of the effort for determining the aim of religious education. According to Osterman, a radical shift of emphasis in the aim of religious education occurred during the Graded Period of 1908-1932. Actually, during that period, many theoretical writings and foundational statements by religious educators and publishers of curriculum materials claimed that the aim of religious education was the development of the fullest religious life of the child in the present.[137] This goes with the growth-oriented aim of religious education, which is in direct contrast to a focus on conversion for a right relationship with God.[138] However, throughout the periods of the Curriculum Guide, the Curriculum Plan, the Babel II, all in the twentieth century, the aim of the materials for religious education tended to focus primarily on mastery of knowledge-content--biblical or theological or a combination of both.[139]

## Controversies Regarding Teaching-Learning Models

The fourth controversy in Protestant curriculum has been about the teaching-learning models. A tension exists between

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[136] Osterman, 535.

[137] Osterman, 535-36.

[138] Osterman, 536.

[139] Osterman, 536.

transmission (or indoctrination-oriented) models and problem-solving models. Educationally, a transmissive model of teaching-learning shares the same impositional spirit with the content-centered religious education. For those who favor the content-centered religious education, religious education curriculum is designed to communicate a body of religious knowledge to the rising generation.[140] A problem-solving model goes with the learner-centered religious education. Those who advocate the problem-solving model largely favor an action-oriented method.

In George Albert Coe's comparison, the conservative view is in accordance with the transmissive model of religious teaching and learning. According to Coe, writing in 1922, conservatives who support transmissive education assume that all essential matters are already and forever settled; therefore, the function of teaching is to lead the learners to adjust their thinking and their choices.[141] On the other hand, liberals, who themselves have freely used historical methods in the study of the Scriptures, tend to approve the cultivation of judgment in learners, with the consequence of a different perspective with reference to the entire content of the curriculum. As such, according to Coe, the conservative has a predetermined set of ideas to impose upon

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[140] Lankard, 95.

[141] George Albert Coe, "Opposing Theories of the Curriculum," Religious Education 17 (1922): 145.

the learners, whereas the liberal invites learners to judge relative values. Furthermore, to this end the liberal tends to introduce material from a wider range of experience which leads to some educational discussions.[142]

As described earlier and as highlightened by Frank Glenn Lankard, the teaching-learning model assumed during the first three periods of curriculum development in the United States (1785-1872) was catechetical. This catechetical method was typical of a transmission-oriented curriculum. This catechetical model involved predetermined questions and answers about doctrinal or scriptural materials which were to be memorized and recited in class.[143] The era of memorizing Scripture began early in the nineteenth century. For about ten or fifteen years prior to the use of the Parmele question in 1823, the chief exercise of Sunday-school pupils was the repetition of Scripture verses.[144]

Lankard gives two reasons why the memory method of Bible study was used when the Bible was given pre-eminent place in the religious curriculum. First of all, the Bible is not a graded book, adapted to the needs and interests of various ages. Second, Lankard argues that the commonly accepted method of learning in the schools of that period was that of memorization. These two considerations make it seem

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[142] Coe, "Opposing Theories," 145.

[143] Lankard, 94, 132, 197.

[144] Lankard, 128.

altogether natural that when children of that period studied the Bible they should employ the memoriter method.[145]

In the Uniform Lesson Period (1872-1908), the Uniform Lesson Series embodied an exegetical, expository model which was applied to the teaching and learning of scriptures. This model generally utilized a verse-by-verse exegetical method and provided the learners with explanations and illustrations to impart an understanding of scripture. These materials provided little help in relating biblical materials to students' lives. Rather the materials depended on the individual students to make connections with their life situation.[146]

In fact, in the early years of the twentieth century the agitation for better methods in religious education gathered strength rapidly. The principles of Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827), a Swiss educator, Johann Friedreich Herbart (1776-1841), a German educator, and Friedrich Wilhelm August Froebel (1782-1852), best known as the father of the kindergarten, had by this time greatly modified methods of public-school education. Education was seen to be the unfolding of natural capacities within the learner rather than the cramming of something into his or her mind.[147] The newly discovered psychology were applied to the study of religious

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[145] Lankrad, 132.

[146] Lankard, 252-61.

[147] Brown, 104.

development in human lives by such writers as E. D. Starbuck in his _Psychology of Religion_, and Coe in _The Spiritual Life_, and _The Religion of a Mature Mind_. These books were typical of growing literature applying scientific knowledge to the field of religious education and supporting the learner-centered curriculum.[148]

In the Graded Period (1908-1932) an experiential model of teaching-learning was developed in the theoretical writings of many religious educator in the United States, such as Coe, George Herbert Betts, William Clayton Bower, and Ernest John Chave. This experiential model was characterized by the problem-solving method and use of projects. Great attention was paid to learners' interests and needs. Ironically, however, the series of curriculum materials produced during this period still remained largely knowledge-content oriented. Therefore, according to Lankard, the curriculum materials generally retained the expository teaching-learning model.[149]

The same expository model of teaching-learning was assumed throughout the Curriculum Guide Period (1932-1955), the Curriculum Plan Period (1955-1968) and Babel II Period (1968-present). During those periods, there had been an

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[148] Brown, 105. See George Albert Coe, _The Spiritual Life_ (New York: Eaton & Mains, 1900); and _The Religion of a Mature Mind_ (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell, 1902). Brown also cites Edwin Diller Starbuck, _The Psychology of Religion: An Empirical Study of the Growth of Religious Consciousness_ (London: W. Scott; New York: Scribner's Sons, 1900).

[149] Lankard, 317-22.

increasing sophistication about the use of activities in materials which helped relate the biblical or theological content to the learner's interests, needs, and developing abilities. However, overall, the teaching-learning model in these periods was still one of exegesis and interpretation of knowledge-content, with the aim of mastery and right understanding.[150]

As such, the two contradictory orientations to teaching and learning have often confronted each other. Sometimes, the two teaching-learning orientations have co-existed in a balance between the two.

### A New Balancing Period in Curriculum Design

Pedagogically, the catechetical curriculum resources, which were popular in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and the graded curriculum resources, which were widely used in the early twentieth century, are good examples which show two very different kinds of curriculum materials. Historically, the two different characteristics have often become the clues to theoretical tensions between the two orientations. However, since the middle of the twentieth century, the religious curriculum materials in the United States have tended to move toward more pedagogically balanced ones. In other words, most of the materials in the United States have not fallen solely into one of the two theoretical extremes.

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[150] Osterman, 537.

Especially, the recently published religious curriculum materials in the United States keep a good balance of the two sides of the curriculum controversies. One clear example of the recent curriculum's good balance is realized in the curriculum content. It is interesting to note that even the curriculum materials which identify themselves as ones which follow some specific curriculum orientation do not lose the pedagogical balance between the two curriculum orientations. For example, the David C. Cook series reads that the series is a Bible-based, Christ-centered Sunday school curriculum.[151] However, this series does not follow the knowledge-orientated curriculum pattern exclusively. This means that this David C. Cook series provides various opportunities to share the learner's life experience in the Bible study class.

The recent curriculum trend of balancing the two extremes of curriculum orientation in the United States, however, does not mean that the historical controversies regarding the nature of religious curriculum have ended. Sometimes the two orientations of the curriculum resources have co-existed in a balance while keeping a tension between the two. However, the two mutually contradictory orientations of the religious curriculum are often confronted by each other, even now. Especially, in Christian religious communities which are built upon theologically diverse backgrounds, such as the Korean immigrant churches in the United States, the determination of

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[151] See _Bible in Life_, 3.

curriculum design is still an ongoing issue in choosing and editing the religious curriculum materials. However, the tense issues among the different views of curriculum are not limited to some specific religious community. This is evidenced in the recent works of educational theorists such as Jack Seymour and Carol Wehrheim, who still observe the two seemingly antithetical approaches and want to engage them in a dialogical relationship. They think that connecting the two extreme trends of religious education is still a primary task of Christian education today.[152]

The conflicts and co-existence of the two different orientations of curriculum point to the anthropological issues underlying a comprehensive curriculum plan for religious education. In the next chapter, we will discuss theological anthropologies which have been closely related with the different forms of religious education design. In Chapter 4, we will see more concretely why and how curriculum orientations are functionally related to anthropological perspectives, and how these affect the planning of religious curriculum resources.

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[152] Seymour and Wehrheim, 124.

Chapter 3

Theological Anthropologies Underlying Curriculum Plan

A funny fable called "The Blind Men and the Elephant" begins as follows:

> Once there was a village where all the inhabitants were blind. When a man passed on day riding an elephant, a group of the village men cried out asking the rider to let them touch the great beast, for though they had heard about elephants, they had never been close to one.[1]

About six of them were allowed to approach the animal, and touch a different part of the body. Somebody touched the animal's side; Others touched the elephant's tusk, the ear, the trunk, a leg, or back. Then they shared their experiences. All six did not yield a single point in their arguments that their experience of the animal was the authentic. Interestingly, the story finishes with an unconcluded conclusion: "To this day the argument has not been resolved, and the people of that village have no idea what an elephant looks like."[2]

The fable suggests the necessity of a synthetic approach to understanding human nature. The synthetic approach is a method which combines different elements, even mutually contradictory ones, in a framework. In this connection, the fable above reveals that the blind men failed to share the

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[1] William R. White, <u>Speaking in Stories</u> (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing, 1982), 78.

[2] White, 78.

real nature of the elephant because their experiences were fragmentary and the fragments were not combined into a synthetic pattern. In terms of synthesis, the real problem of the fable is not that their experience was inauthentic, but that they did not comprehensively synthesize their fragmentary experiences.

The significance of understanding human nature in religious education lies in the fact that the educator's view of humanity is one of the most influential elements in establishing an educational plan. Educationally, the understanding of human nature becomes the basis for understanding the learner's nature in an educational plan. For example, a pessimistic understanding of the learners' nature supports content-centered education, whereas an optimistic understanding of the learners' nature supports experience-centered education.

Educationally, the extremes in understanding human nature even result in dichotomous confrontation in educational planning. This means that theorists who hold extreme understandings of human nature tend to avoid comprehensive mechanisms, emphasizing a partial aspect of humanity and ignoring other aspects. Thus, an understanding of human nature without a synthetic mechanism might hinder the development of a comprehensive educational plan. Theologically, religious educators have often described humanity as being the image of God and/or being the fallen

sinner. These two concepts have often been illustrated as theological bases that produce religious theories and practices which appear to be mutually contradictory. Grady Temp Sparkmam clearly reveals the limitations of theological extremes which lean heavily in one of the two interpretations of human nature. In Sparkman's explanation, a theology that emphasizes the image of God but ignores the fall of humanity will be falsely optimistic of human nature. On the other hand, pessimism about humanity will be the result of concentrating on human sinfulness and ignoring the fact that humanity is made in the image of God.[3]

Many theologians and religious educators have attempted to create a comprehensive concept of humanity which transcends the two extreme understandings of human nature. In fact, many education theorists, like Randolph C. Miller, have already put forth an ideal concept of humanity through introducing a synthetic humanity which keeps a balance between the two extremes.[4] Sometimes, the confusion regarding the understanding of human nature seems to end in the arena of religious education. Moreover, the discussion of theological anthropology, which comes with the two extreme concepts--the

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[3] Grady Temp Sparkman, The Influence of Two Theological Concepts--"The Image of God in Man" and "Fallen Man"--on the Thought of Selected American Protestant Religious Education Theorists, Ed.D. Diss., University of Kansas, 1980 (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1987), 1.

[4] Randolph C. Miller, ed., The Church and Organized Movements (New York: Harper & Row, 1946), 6.

image of God and the fallen sinner-- even seems to be outdated. However, educational confusion arising from the extreme understanding of humanity is still serious in the practical field of religious education.

Traditionally, many Korean Christian religious educators were greatly exposed to Calvinistic pessimism regarding humanity. They favor tradition-centered educational programs. On the other hand, the Korean religious educators who favor a theologically optimistic understanding of humanity propose children-centered programs. We can easily find that the extreme understanding of humanity is still one of the critical causes of the conflicts which the religious educators of Korean local churches are experiencing.

In terms of the contemporary situation, the anthropological controversy in the Korean churches is similar to the Christologcial discussion in Christian History. A comprehensive Christology--Our Lord is truly divine and truly human--had been established long ago. However, throughout Christian history, the Christological discussion has been involved in a perennial issue, represented by the continual swing between two poles according to the context of religious practice. Similarly, although some comprehensive concepts of humanity have already been put forth, anthropological discussions have continually swung between two poles as regards religious education programs, and this continues even now. The situation of the Korean churches would be a good

example to show the contemporataneity of anthropological discussion in religious education.

We can detect the significance of anthropological discussions for religious education planning in many religious education theorists. James D. Smart is one of them. Furthermore, because Smart's whole approach to religious education is thoroughly connected with anthropology,[5] the examination of Smart's discussion of human nature is good groundwork upon which the functional relationship between an understanding of human nature and religious education planning can effectively be defined.

Smart's idea of humanity is mingled with his criticism of three anthropologies relating to religious education: moralism, evangelism, and liberalism. In Smart's thought, those three views of human nature are false because they lean toward one of two interpretations of humanity, toward either the pessimistic or optimistic sides mentioned above. Drawn from Smart's criticism, those three views lose a balanced concept of humanity, overemphasizing one aspect of humanity and ignoring the other. In Smart's anthropological criticisms, the moralistic spirit about humanity is similar to the liberal one, which leans toward the optimistic side. In that sense, evangelistic and liberal definitions of humanity become a good background against which the core of Smart's

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[5] Mary C. Boys, Educating in Faith (Kansas City: Sheed & Ward, 1989), 72.

understanding of human nature is comparatively identified.

### Evangelistic Understanding of Human Nature

Defining evangelism is difficult because it is no monolith.[6] Although Smart sharply criticizes evangelism, he does not identify in a definite way what kind of evangelism he means. However, we can easily read in his writing that the evangelism to which Smart refers is a particular type of evangelism which was widespread in New England and closely associated with many of the Sunday Schools.[7] Introducing Horace Bushnell's educational task, Smart, interestingly, uses a modifier "narrowly" to designate the particular evangelistic Christianity on which he focuses.[8] According to Smart's description of narrowly evangelistic Christianity, the particular evangelism to which he refers indicates the evangelistic movement in the United States which accompanied the First Great Awakening (1730-1760).

Theologically, evangelism is regarded as a reaction against the rationalism bequeathed to the churches by the Enlightenment.[9] In his book Modern Christian Thought, James C. Livingston refers to melioristic optimism as one of the characteristics of the Enlightenment spirit. According to the melioristic optimism of the Enlightenment, even the seeming

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[6] Boys, 13.

[7] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 52.

[8] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 52.

[9] Boys, 39.

evil or darkness is a kind of good in that it is a necessary
constituent of the whole. Livingston explains the optimism of
the Enlightenment in a metaphoric term: "What looks at a
distance as indeed very gray may be a rosy pink on closer
examination."[10]

In the same manner, the Enlightenment understanding of
humanity is optimistic. Not only is natural humanity not
evil, but it can also be its own deliverer. The evangelist's
reacting point to the Enlightenment is its optimistic trust in
the ability of humanity to deliver itself. Ernst Cassirer
explains Enlightenment hope as follows:

> When the compulsory form of society, which
> has hitherto prevailed, falls and is replaced
> by a new form of political and ethical community
> --a community in which every member, instead of
> being subjected to the arbitrary will of others,
> obeys only the general will which he [or she]
> recognizes and acknowledges as his [or her]
> own--then the hour of deliverance has arrived.[11]

According to the Enlightenment spirit, it is futile to expect
this deliverance from without because no God can bring it
about for humanity. This means that, with the Enlightenment
perspectives, humanity must rather become its own deliverer
and in the ethical sense its own creator.[12] As such, in
terms of anthropology, evangelism is characterized by its

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[10] James C. Livingston, <u>Modern Christian Thought</u> (New
York: Macmillan Publishing, 1971), 5.

[11] Livingston, 6, is quoting Ernst Cassirer in <u>The
Philosophy of the Enlightenment</u> (Boston, 1960).

[12] Livingston, 5.

reaction to the Enlightenment understanding of human innate goodness, and a belief in the total depravity of humanity. According to evangelism, all the goodness that exists in humanity is tainted by sin, and no dimension of life is free from its effects. Through the fall, sin entered the race and this spiritual infection has been passed on from generation to generation. The propensity to sin is within humanity from birth, its power cannot be broken by human effort.[13]

Jonathan Edwards voices a typical understanding of evangelism regarding human nature. Edwards, a Congregational minister in Massachusetts, was born in 1703 in East Windsor, Connecticut. He entered the ministry in 1726 after a bachelor's degree at Yale. He served briefly as the minister of a Presbyterian church of New York City (1722-3) and a tutor at Yale College (1724-6).[14] After his long association with the Congregationalist church in Northampton, Massachusetts, he worked as a minister to congregations of Indians and whites, and died in 1758, only three weeks after he began his work as the president of Princeton University, then named New Jersey College.[15] Historically, Edwards, as the primary theologian

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[13] R. V. Pierard, "Evangelicalism," in _Evangelical Dictionary of Theology_, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1984), 379.

[14] Mark A. Noll, "Edwards, Jonathan," in _Evangelical Dictionary of Theology_, 343.

[15] Harold P. Simonson, ed., introduction to _Selected Writings of Jonathan Edwards_ (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1970), 23.

and spokesperson of the First Great Awakening, is also regarded as the eighteenth century's most powerful exponent of Calvinism,[16] incorporating the spirit of the Great Awakening into a version of Calvinism.[17] Edwards' role as America's greatest evangelical theologian is clearly revealed in the depth and breath of his writing and preaching, which are deeply rooted in evangelical spirit.

First of all, in Edwards' thought, humanity was understood as originally created in the image of God. According to Edwards, humanity possessed two principles, a nature principle, which is inferior, and a spiritual principle, which is superior. According to Edwards, the first principle, natural and inferior, corresponds to humanity's ascendancy over the animals. The human naming of, and rule over, the animal world is a part of the inferior sense of the image of God in humanity.[18] Edwards explains: "And herein does very much consist that image of God wherein he [God] made man [humanity], by which God distinguishes man [humanity] from the beasts, viz., in those faculties and principles of nature, whereby He [She] is capable of moral Agency."[19] As such,

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[16] Noll, 344.

[17] Kenneth Cauthen, _The Impact of American Religious Liberalism_ (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 4.

[18] Jonathan Edwards, "A Treatise concerning Religious Affections," _The Works of President Edwards_, 8th ed., 4 vols., (New York: Leavitt & Allen, 1855), 3:102.

[19] Edwards, _Works_, 2:19-20.

even in this inferior sense, people were superior to the animals over which they rule because people were created as moral agents. A moral agent is a being who is capable of those actions that have a moral quality, and which can properly be denominated good or evil in a moral sense, virtuous or vicious, commendable or faulty.[20] For Edwards, this inferior, natural dimension of the image of God in humanity is reason and understanding, its natural ability, and dominion over the creatures.[21] Though natural, this speculative knowledge is the basis for spiritual knowledge:

> For a speculative knowledge of it,
> without a spiritual knowledge, is in vain
> and to no purpose, but to make our
> condemnation the greater. Yet a
> speculative knowledge is also of infinite
> importance in this respect, that without
> it we can have no spiritual or practical
> knowledge.[22]

The second principle describing humanity's relationship to the image of God is spiritual, and this principle is superior. The superior faculty is also spoken of as the divine nature and as consisting of moral excellency and holiness. Edwards explains it as follows:

> Besides these [the inferior, natural,
> fleshly] there were superior principles, that
> were spiritual, holy, and divine, summarily
> comprehended in divine love; wherein consisted
> the spiritual image of God, and man's [human]
> righteousness and true holiness; which are

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[20] Edwards, Works, 2:19.

[21] Edwards, Works, 3:102.

[22] Edwards, Works, 4:4.

called in Scripture the divine nature.[23]

This superior principle involves a moral excellency in humanity parallel to the same nature in God. Edwards says in Religious Affection:

> As there are two kinds of attributes of God, according to our way of conceiving of him [sic], his moral attributes, which summed up in his holiness, and his natural attributes of strength, knowledge etc., that constitute the greatness of God; so there is a two-fold image of God in man [sic], his moral or spiritual image, which is his holiness, that is the image of God's moral excellency ....[24]

However, the critical state of humanity in its nature is brought about in the fact that the positive things do not so continue. In other words, the spiritual image in real humanity is fallen, and humanity is no longer capable of actualizing such spiritual powers. According to Edwards, the superior divine principles have wholly ceased, and the inferior principles have become reigning principles due to sin.[25] The basis of Edwards' pessimistic view of human nature is in his thought that the natural, inferior principle gained ascendancy over the superior principle, and is thus no longer guided and governed by the superior or spiritual principle. Edwards declares:

> Man's [sic] love to his own honor, separate interest, and private pleasure, which

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[23] Edwards, Works, 2:476-77.

[24] Edwards, Works, 3:102.

[25] Edwards, Works, 3:477.

before was wholly subordinate unto love to God,
and regard to his authority and glory, now
disposes and impels him to pursue those
objects, without regard to God's honor or law;
because there is no true regard to those divine
things left in him.[26]

Edwards thinks that evidence of human fallenness is to be found both in what can be observed in human behavior and found in the teachings of Scripture. Edwards expresses this belief in his work on original sin and in a sermon on human natural blindness to religion: "Therefore, if the Scripture had not hold us so, yet we might safely conclude, that mankind are not now, as they were made at first; but that they are in a fallen state and condition."[27]

For Edwards, the beauty and holiness of humanity so made was lost with the Fall, as Edwards wrote: "Sin destroys the spiritual principles, but not the natural faculties."[28] As a result, humanity feels under a curse by which the superior principles were made inoperative, "and thus humanity was left in a state of darkness, woeful corruption and ruin; nothing but flesh without spirit."[29] Thus are the natural faculties left unharnessed and without regulation from the superior nature. Without such regulation they then will not seek after the highest, holiest and most excellent, but rather will give

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[26] Edwards, Works, 2:477.

[27] Edwards, Works, 4:30.

[28] Edwards, Works, 4:454.

[29] Edwards, Works, 2:477.

humanity over to the lowest and the most evil.

Edwards defends this part of his doctrine of sin in this way:

> The heart can have no tendency to
> make itself better, till it begins to
> have a better tendency; for therein
> consists its badness, viz., its having
> no good tendency or inclination. And
> to begin to have a good tendency, or,
> which is the same thing, a tendency and
> inclination to be better, is the same
> thing as to begin already to be better.
> And therefore the heart's inclination
> to be good, cannot be the thing that
> first gives rise to its being made
> good. For its inclination to be
> better, it the same thing with its
> becoming better.[30]

As such, the natural, inferior principle rules over the once superior but now fallen spiritual principle. In this critical situation, all persons come under an "immense guilt" in which "they can have no merit or worthiness to countervail."[31]

In this fallen state, the image of God was ruined and human nature is corrupted and destroyed.[32] Humanity is "dead in sin."[33] This depravity is, according to Edwards:

> Both odious, and also pernicious,
> fatal and destructive, in the highest
> sense, as inevitably tending to that
> which implies man's [human] eternal ruin;
> it shows that man [humanity], as he [she]

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[30] Edwards, *Works*, 2:569.

[31] Edwards, *Works*, 2:325.

[32] Edwards, *Works*, 1:303.

[33] Edwards, *Works*, 1:303.

> is by nature, is in a deplorable and
> undone state, in the highest sense.  And
> this proves that men [people] do not
> come into the world perfectly innocent
> in the sight of God, and without any
> just exposedness to his [her]
> displeasure.  For the being by nature in
> a lost and ruined state, in the highest
> sense, is not consistent with being by
> nature in a state of favor with God.[34]

In Edwards's thought, this fallen state of humanity is
extended to all humanity: "This is true of all persons of all
constitutions, capacities, conditions, manners, opinions and
educations; in all countries, climates, nations and ages."[35]
For Edwards, not even the little children, that is, the
infants, are exempt, or so it would seem.  Edwards argues that
even children of believers are sinners.

> If there are any in the world, though
> but lately become capable of acting for
> themselves, as subjects of the law of God,
> who are perfectly free from sin, such are
> most likely to be found among the children of
> Christian parents, who give them the most
> pious education, and set them the best
> examples; and therefore such would never be
> so likely to be found in any part of the
> world, as in the primitive Christian church,
> in the first age of Christianity (the age of
> the church's greatest purity) so long after
> Christianity had been established, that there
> had been time for great numbers of children
> to be born, and educated by those primitive
> Christians.[36]

That is what Edwards believes, and he preaches it against
the tide of a more optimistic view of humanity after the Fall.

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[34] Edwards, <u>Works</u>, 2:323.

[35] Edwards, <u>Works</u>, 2:320.

[36] Edwards, <u>Works</u>, 2:326-27.

The dark picture of the human condition does not, however, mean that there is no light at all, for Edwards believed that the image can be restored. Though there is nothing in humanity to deserve salvation, still humanity is given salvation. However, this restoration is, for Edwards, a part of God's plan.

> The design of God was, to restore it from this ruin, and not only to deliver it from death in the resurrection, but to deliver it from mortality itself, in making it like unto Christ's glorious body. The world was ruined, as to man [humanity], as effectually as if it had been reduced to chaos again; all heaven and earth were overthrown. But the design of God was, to restore all, and as it were to create a new heaven and a new earth.[37]

As such, human salvation, for Edwards, was God's work, although humanity had to act on it, had to hear the word and receive it. However, such experience is not democratically available to humanity, for salvation is given only to the elect, all of these action's being a part of the absolute sovereignty of God.[38]

As in Edwards' thought, the conservative evangelistic view of education emphasizes that humanity has thoroughly lost the image of God and is thoroughly sinful. James Smart is concerned about this view, although he does not associate Edwards' anthropology, in an explicit way, with the forms of evangelism which he seeks to overcome in a comprehensive

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[37] Edwards, Works, 1:303.

[38] Edwards, Works, 2:513-46.

educational plan. In his book <u>The Teaching Ministry of the Church</u>, however, Smart explains the flow of the Sunday School in America, and he implicitly associates the Calvinistic view of Edwards' evangelism, which widespread in New England in the eighteen century, with the evangelism that needs to be overcome in his contemporary religious education planning.[39] Historically, Calvinism is the most influential of the classical types of Protestantism in America, and it formed the origin of what was later to be identified as the New England theology.[40] Edwards' illustration of humanity represents the evangelistic view of human nature, which was greatly influential in New England in the eighteenth century. A specific example toward which Smart is directly responding is the evangelistic doctrine that every child, regardless of the context in which he or she was nurtured, continues as a creature of sin until the time of a sudden conversion.

Edwards' evangelistic anthropology is not (and should not be regarded as) theologically outmoded. In this connection, it is interesting to read C. G. Goen's comment that Jonathan Edwards' historical documentation and theological defense are still sustained as an ongoing tradition.[41] In reality, Edwards' theological anthropology became a living tradition

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[39] Smart, <u>Teaching Ministry</u>, 52.

[40] Cauthen, 4.

[41] See <u>Works of Jonathan Edwards</u>, gen. ed. John E. Smith (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972), vol. 4, <u>The Great Awakening</u>, ed. C. G. Goen, 1, as cited in Sparkman.

which continues in religious communities favoring the evangelistic spirit. Traditionally, many of the Korean churches in both Korea and the United States have been under the strong influence of this evangelistic spirit, which accompanied the Great Awakening in the United States. In fact, the evangelistic atmosphere of the Korean churches is closely connected with the American mission history in Korea. We can explain this in two ways. First, one of the strongest motives for the American mission in Korea was the evangelical enthusiasm influenced in part by the Great Awakening in which Edwards' spirit was involved. Secondly, many Korean Christians are still following the evangelistic tradition in their religious practice such as in worship planning, education programming, and preaching. Accordingly, the conservative-evangelistic spirit which Edwards exemplified continues to be present as one of the contemporary anthropological options in religious education planning.

In sum, a critical limitation of the conservative-evangelistic understanding of humanity is that in it, a paradoxical synthesis of the two images of humanity, as being in the image of God and being a fallen sinner, is lost, magnifying the aspect of sinfulness, while excluding the image of God. This is because in conservative evangelism, the reality of human nature is seen to be an utterly helpless and depressed condition, which emphasizes the pessimistic aspect of the two biblical images of humanity and loses the

paradoxical synthesis of the two.

## Liberal Understanding of Human Nature

Liberal theology has arisen in the desire to adapt religious ideas to modern culture and modes of thinking,[42] and liberal theologians have often attempted to reformulate Christian theology in light of their commitments to secular thought.[43] However, according to William R. Hutchison, no single religious movement can claim a monopoly on the term "liberal" due to its variety of contextual natures.[44] Historically, liberal theology is regarded as a reconstruction of Christian thought undertaken in response to the Enlightenment and in basic sympathy with it.[45] Kenneth Cauthen explains the complex factors which constitute the milieu in which liberal theology developed into three elements: emphasis on continuity rather than discontinuity in the world, focus on the autonomy of human reason and experience rather than on an authoritative divine revelation, and stress on the dynamic rather then the static nature of

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[42] R. V. Pierard, "Liberalism, Theological," in _Evangelical Dictionary of Theology_, ed. Walter A. Elwell (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House), 631.

[43] Elias, 40.

[44] William R. Hutchison, ed., introduction to _American Protestant Thought in the Liberal Era_ (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1968), 1.

[45] Delwin Brown and Sheila Greeve Davaney, "Liberalism: USA," in _The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Thought_.

life and the world.[46]

In terms of understanding human nature, the distinctive element of liberal theology is its emphasis on the idea of the essential goodness of human nature. William H. P. Faunce has a strong conviction of the connection between goodness of human nature between the liberal spirit. According to Faunce "The center of studies is for us the nature of the child, made in the image of God, and revealing God at every stage of its growth."[47] From this context, Faunce was concerned to stress of the idea of the essential divinity of human nature as reflected in the child. Later Faunce arrives at the position that human nature is naturally good.[48]

Theological liberalism was once dominant in the origins of the religious education movement in Protestantism.[49] In fact, progressive education was supported by liberal theology. George Albert Coe is one of the pioneers in this religious education movement, and Coe's idea of human nature is a good example which shows the positive understanding of human nature in liberal theology.

Coe was born in Mendon, New York, in 1862. After being educated at the University of Rochester, Boston University,

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[46] Cauthen, 6.

[47] Quated in H. Shelton Smith, Faith and Nurture (New York: Charles Scribner's Son, 1941), 94.

[48] H. Shelton Smith, 94.

[49] Elias, 41.

and the University of Berlin, he taught philosophy, psychology, and education at many universities and seminaries until his retirement from Teachers College of Columbia University in 1927. Coe wrote many books and articles, and lectured widely to learned societies and schools. He was also one of the founders of the Religious Education Association. He believed that religious education needs to function more as a transmitter of a Christian life-style, characterized by deliberate and conscious obedience to God. As such, Coe's spirit is evidenced in his books: Education in Religion and Morals (1904), A Social Theory of Religious Education (1917), The Motives of Men (1928), Educating for Citizenship (1932), and What is Religion Doing to Our Consciences (1943).

Coe asserts that the very basic idea of human nature is that humanity is a being made in the image of God. To illustrate this, Coe writes, "God has made us in his [her] own image and likeness; he [she] has formed us for him [her] self, and there is a sense in which, as one of the Fathers said, the soul is naturally Christian."[50] That idea of Coe goes to the conviction that human nature is essentially religious,[51] and has something within it that is clearly intermingled with divinity: "The ability to recognize God and to discern spiritual matters testifies to something within us that is

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[50] See Coe, "1903- Religious Education as a Part of General Education," Religious Education 47 (1952): 128.

[51] Coe, Spiritual Life, 54.

clearly intermingled with divinity."[52] Coe says, "Man [humanity] is essentially a religious being, and that some personal touch with the divine must be included incomplete humanity."[53] And again, Coe says, "The conception of a reasonable religion implies the existence within each of us something that may be called divine."[54]

To reinforce the conviction of the religiosity of human nature, Coe writes that "The history of religion begins its recital with the affirmation that man [humanity] as such has a religious impulse out of which have sprung all the religions of the world."[55] Furthermore, arguing that humanity is made in the image of God, Coe says:

> The child comes forth from God bearing
> the image of the Creator. That God created
> man [humanity] in his [God's] own image may
> once have seemed to imply many grotesque
> notions of God, as that he [God] has a
> physical form which ours resembles. But the
> phrase never loses its power over us because,
> with every advance in our conceptions of God,
> we discover something corresponding thereto in
> the structure of our own mind. Man [humanity]
> has a religious nature.[56]

In the same book, Coe maintains, "The primary factor in any such development is the child's own impulse, which we have

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[52] Coe, _Religion of a Mature Mind_, 414.

[53] Coe, _Spiritual Life_, 54.

[54] Coe, _Religion of a Mature Mind_, 414.

[55] George A. Coe, _Education in Religion and Morals_ (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell, 1904), 38.

[56] Coe, _Education in Religion and Morals_, 37.

already agreed to regard as the utterance of the Divine Spirit within him [her]."[57]

As such, Coe's positive image of human nature is focused on his idea of human inner divine impulsion[58] and God's immanence in God's creation.[59] In other words, Coe magnifies the value of the fact that humanity was created in the image of God, and that it has in it the divine life, and an impulse toward the religious. In Coe's thought, an inner impulse and the divine life dwelling in personality is given attention in dealing with Coe's supposition that God, the Father of all humanity, made it in God's image. For Coe, the religious impulse manifests a "`prevenient grace,' the divine empowering and inspiration that `come before' our human acts and give them effect."[60] The religious impulse is an interactive reality that seeks to unify humanity with its self, its fellows, nature, and "all that is."[61]

Coe's idea of God, as a social being, is closely related with his explanation of the nature of humanity. Coe says,

> God, as well as man [humanity], is a social being. Glorifying him [God], accordingly, is no interplay between two mere individuals, each of whom seeks his [her] particular ends, but rather the maintenance of such an intimate relationship

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[57] Coe, <u>Education in Religion and Morals</u>, 210.

[58] Coe, <u>Education in Religion and Morals</u>, 56.

[59] Coe, <u>Religion of a Mature Mind</u>, 415.

[60] Coe, <u>Education in Religion and Morals</u>, 39.

[61] Coe, <u>Education in Religion and Morals</u>, 201.

between the human and the divine existence as
enables each to realize his [her] life in the
life of the other.[62]

According to Coe, God is a part of humanity, and humanity
is a part of God; the finite and the infinite are inter-
related, thus "God as well as man [humanity] is a social
being, and that he [God] is in earnest when he [God] enters
into social relations with us his [God's] creature.[63]

Coe's notion of an immanent God is closely related with
his understanding of human nature. For Coe, God is immanent
in all things, that is, present and working. Coe develops his
idea of divine immanence saying, "In whatever our eyes look
upon, or our ears listen to, we have to do with. In all
things that our hands handle, we deal with him [God]. In all
our faculties of intellect, of will, of instinct, of
conscience, of emotion, we are with and in God."[64]
Furthermore, Coe claims that belief in divine immanence would
lead away from the rigid theology of depravity and a special
act of salvation to the idea that God is really not too far
from us: "The doctrine of immanence is little more than a
consistent exposition of the ancient belief that God is not
only the Creator of the Universe, but also the omnipresent
Upholder of all things."[65] In Coe's thought, divine

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[62] Coe, _Religion of a Mature Mind_, 184.

[63] Coe, _Religion of a Mature Mind_, 185.

[64] Coe, _Religion of a Mature Mind_, 302.

[65] Coe, _Religion of a Mature Mind_, 415.

immanence means that God exists within rather than outside or above the precesses of life in the world:

> We identify the ultimate dynamic of nature
> with the divine will itself. The inexhaustible
> supply of energy is just the life of God. God is
> not merely the prime mover but also the present
> mover in all motion. Whatsoever is wrought within
> the circle of His [God's] own life, and the
> every manifested in any change is ultimately the
> divine being himself [itself].[66]

However, this does not mean that Coe denies the existence of sin and evil. For Coe, sin and evil are present realities. However, sin is not merely the act of an individual standing before a monarchial God, and evil is not a cosmic force to be personalized in a devil. If humanity is fallen it is not a personal historical event, but an anti-social act, and a failure to more toward the realization of the kingdom or democracy of God. As such, in Coe's thought, the notion of the total depravity of human nature is rejected from his educational supposition and the notion of divine life or impulse toward the religious. Coe despises the doctrine of total depravity, unmasking it as a contradiction to "the whole idea of religious education."[67]

As shown so far, according to Coe's liberal optimistic idea of human nature, although the child needs to learn to recognize his or her faults and failings, attributing these faults and failings to total depravity is not desirable. Such

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[66] See Coe, "The Idea of God," Religious Education 6 (1911): 178-79.

[67] Coe, Education in Religion and Morals, 49.

an emphasis on total depravity and the individuality of sin is likely to burden the child with a sense of guilt that will only impede his or her relationship with God and the world. Instead the emphasis should be on God's prevenient grace, and as Smart describes the view, there should never be a time when the child has the slightest doubt that he or she is a Christian.[68] The liberal, according to Smart, believes that in a process of growth there are bound to be imperfections and mistakes, but they can be forgotten as one passes onto greater heights.[69]

In explaining his plan for religious education, James D. Smart frequently refers to Coe's liberal theology both implicitly and explicitly.[70] Specifically, Smart critically deals with Coe's thought in which the image of the fallen sinner is lost in his magnifying the value of the fact that humanity was created in the image of God. Coe's anthropology is what Smart associates with the limitation of liberal-progressive anthropology in envisioning a comprehensive religious education program in his day. Clearly, Coe's positive anthropology is one of the historical bases upon which later learning-centered religious education program was designed, and such educational practices generally have been grounded in a theological optimism regarding human nature.

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[68] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 164.

[69] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 164.

[70] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, chaps. 3 and 8.

As Smart understands, liberal theology embodies this optimistic view of human nature. The progressive educators based in liberal theology had a confident belief in the possibilities of Christian nurturing for the realization of Christian personality and the achievement of a more Christian social order. According to Paul Vieth, writing a few years before James Smart's The Teaching Ministry of the Church, this optimistic confidence, or the liberal progressive notion of humanity, was in line with the beliefs of general education that in and through adequate educational procedures the possibilities of man (humanity) could be developed.[71] The real limitation of the liberal-progressive understanding of human nature is that in its concept of humanity, a paradoxical synthesis of the two images of humanity, as being in the image of God and being a fallen sinner, is lost. The aspect of the image of God is magnified, and sinfulness is neglected.

## Smart's Understanding of Human Nature

In envisioning anthropology which is appropriate to Christian education program, Smart refuses the two extreme views of human nature--evangelistic and liberal--in order to pursue a more comprehensive one. This is because Smart believes that the fragmentary experiences or observations of human nature without a comprehensive understanding of humanity results in a critical failure to reach an authentical

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[71] Paul H. Vieth, "The Foundations of Christian Education," in The Church and Christian Education, ed. Paul H. Vieth (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1947), 55-56.

understanding of human nature. Accordingly, Smart pursues a comprehensive view of human nature which synthesizes the two different elements of humanity which are radically antithetical in both conservative-evangelistic and progressive-liberal views--the image of God and fallen sinner. In this sense, Smart's description of human nature is one of the clearest explanations about the dual nature of humanity as being the image of God and sinner.

For Smart, the understanding of the true nature is not of a simple clarity: "His [human] nature is a mystery, even as the nature of God is a mystery. He [It] cannot know who he [it] is with the simple clarity with which he [it] knows that two and two make four."[72] Smart explains the complexity of understanding human nature as follows:

> Only a part of his [its] being is subject
> to observation, even by him[it]self or the
> most skillful devices of the psychologists.
> The roots of his [its] nature reach far into
> the unseen and nothing is truer than the
> statement that man [it] is a mystery."[73]

In spite of the mysterious complexity, Smart opens a possibility for finding the true nature of humanity from a theological perspective. In short, Smart's explanation of human nature is thoroughly theological, more specifically biblical.

> Our personal impressions and observations
> are important but not sufficient. We need to

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[72] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 156-57.

[73] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 156.

> know them in the depths of their being, and
> as we have already shown, that is a knowledge
> of human beings that comes to us only as God,
> through the word of the Scriptures, sets
> their lives in the light of his [God's] truth.
> We shall know who our pupils are only as we
> know who we ourselves are, but letting our
> entire existence come under the light of
> God's presence.[74]

Saying that human nature is a mystery, Smart explains humanity in a paradoxical way, which is in accordance with a Christian doctrine of humanity. Smart argues that the Christian doctrine of humanity always says two things, which are, at first glance, contradictory.[75] More concretely, Smart's description of human nature is parallel to the paradoxical framework of Kierkegaardian existential dialectics, in which two radically different components--the infinite and the finite, of the temporal and the eternal, of freedom and necessity--are synthesized in one framework. The following statement is the conceptual basis of Smart's paradoxical explanation of his Christian notion of humanity.

> It [a Christian doctrine of humanity]
> says that man's [humanity's] only true nature
> is the likeness of God as we see it in the
> nature of Jesus Christ... But when we hear
> the second word of the gospel concerning man
> [humanity], that he [it] is a sinner,
> imprisoned within him[her]self by the power
> of sin dwelling in him [her], and unable
> merely by the use of his [her] own resources
> to attain his [her] true life, we accuse the
> Christian gospel of taking an unreasonably
> dark view of man [humanity], of making him
> [her] much blacker and weaker than he [she]

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[74] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 160-61.

[75] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 160.

> really is. But when we do this, we are
> falling into the absurdity of accusing the
> gospel of being both too optimistic and too
> pessimistic concerning man [humanity].[76]

As felt from the statement above, in Smart's paradoxical thinking, the synthetic elements are the two biblical images of humanity, the image of God and the fallen sinner. First, for Smart, the starting point for a Christian in his definition of true humanity is Jesus Christ. According to Smart, Jesus Christ is not only the revelation of the nature of God but also the revelation of the nature of man.[77] In short, for Smart, the true humanity is Jesus Christ.

> The humanity of Jesus is a humanity that
> is what it is because of God. He is the
> fulfillment of humanity in the sense of being
> the completion of humanity, but only because
> in each moment he is filled with the Holy
> Spirit and lives out the infinite resources
> of God."[78]

As such, the first aspect of humanity is very positive according to the example of Jesus Christ. As Smart explains it, "To be human in our relationships with other people is to be mastered, as Jesus was, by a love that overcomes self and penetrates the misery of the other man [people]."[79] Immediately, Smart continues:

> To be human is to be made in the likeness
> of God, merciful as his is merciful, just as

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[76] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 160.

[77] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 157.

[78] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 157.

[79] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 157.

he is just, true as he is true, holy as he is
holy, and it is the perfection of that likeness
to God in Jesus that is the perfection of his
humanity.[80]

As such, the aspect of the true humanity which recognized

in Christ is very positive in human beings as God intends it

to be.  For Smart, we should think of this positive nature of

humanity as a special Christian variety of humanity: "It is

manifestation of what it means to be, in the fullest sense, a

human being.  This is what man [humanity] was created to be

when God made him [her] in his [God's] likeness."[81]

However, for Smart, humanity as the likeness of God is

only half of the real humanity.  Smart delineates another

aspect of human nature, in negative terms, which is the fallen

sinner who sinned against God.  Smart opens his illustration

of the other side of humanity like this:

But this is not man [humanity] as we meet
him [it] in ourselves and in our fellow men
[people].  The man [humanity] whom we know best
is not man [humanity] in the likeness of God,
but man [humanity] in the most radical
unlikeness to God-not a God-determined,
God-centered man [humanity], but a stubbornly
self-centered man [humanity].  If God made man
[humanity] in his [God's] own likeness, then
something has happened to frustrate the design
of God and to pervert man's [human] nature.[82]

According to the Scriptures and the Christian faith, Smart

defines this negative aspect of human nature as of a man

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[80] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 157.

[81] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 158.

[82] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 158.

[humanity] "sinned against God; lured by the prospect of being his [its] own god, he [it] defied the will of God and brought himself [itself] under the dark shadow of guilt."[83]

Smart further explains the reality of human nature with the biblical notion of humanity from Genesis stories: "It is symbolic that, in Genesis, Adam's cutting himself apart from God is followed by Cains's wanton slaying of his brother Abel."[84] According to Smart, sin divorces humanity from God. Sin leaves humanity in darkness, and his [her] enmity toward God is transmuted into a blind and unreasoning hatred of its fellow people. In isolation from God humanity loses its humanity.[85]

Just after describing the two natures of humanity which seem mutually contradictory, Smart suggests a possibility of synthesis of the two elements in a paradoxical system: "But," Smart says, "no matter how deeply a man [person] becomes entangled in sin, he [she] does not cease to be a man [person] who was made in the likeness and image of God."[86] According to Smart, the image of God may be totally defaced in humanity on the surface of its life, but deep beneath the surface, the remembrance remains of what its humanity was intended to

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[83] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 158.

[84] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 158.

[85] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 158.

[86] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 158.

be.[87] Accordingly, Smart argues that a Christian doctrine of humanity has always to say two things--the likeness of God and a sinner, which at first seem contradictory.[88]

When we do this, Smart argues, we are falling into the absurdity of accusing the gospel of being both too optimistic and too pessimistic concerning humanity. Smart says that sometimes the plea is heard for a scaling down both what is expected of humanity and the emphasis upon sin. However, Smart says that Christian truth calls not for a softening, but for a sharpening of the edges of the contradiction, for it is the contradiction between humanity in Christ and the natural humanity in its own self-centeredness.[89]

As such, Smart's understanding of human nature is thoroughly based on the concept of biblical revelation, and the biblical understanding of humanity is acceptable not only to Christians. In Smart's thought, only the biblical understanding of humanity is the true one which should universally be accepted. This idea comes from Smart's conviction that the biblical understanding of humanity is the true manifestation about human nature in the fullest sense.[90]

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[87] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 158.

[88] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 160,

[89] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 160.

[90] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 157-60.

## Smart's Criticism of Modern Theological
## Concepts of Human Nature

Theologically, a paradox of Christian anthropology is in the conceptual tension of humanity between being the image of God and being the fallen sinner. This tension raises a paradoxical question: "How can the image of God be the fallen sinner at the same time?"[91] The characteristics of Smart's paradoxically synthetic understanding of human nature is more clearly demonstrated in his own criticism of what he thought of as false ideas of humanity which widely prevailed in his years. Smart's criticism on false [according to him] ideas of humanity begins with such a theological assumption of biblical revelation. In relating his understanding of human nature, specifically the nature of children, to a religious education plan, Smart puts the focus of his criticism mainly on moralism, evangelism, and liberalism in terms of view of the child.[92] For Smart, these three views of the child are false in the sense that all of three ignore one of the two aspects

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[91] This has been a long-standing theological issue. In dealing with this issue, we need to know the unique concern of religious education compared with systematic theological concern. Systematic theologies discuss this issue with various anthropological concerns. One of those begins with an effort to explain the _causes_ of anthropological variation, setting a question: "How can humanity as the image of God _become_ a being as the fallen sinner?" Whereas, the real concern of religious educators in terms of anthropology begins with an effort to understand the present situation of anthropological variation, setting a question: "How can it be that humanity as the image of God _is_ the fallen sinner at the same time?"

[92] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 160-66.

of human nature--the image of God and sinner, emphasizing one over another, from the biblical notion of humanity.

## Smart's Criticism of a Moralistic View of Humanity

The heart of Smart's criticism of a moralistic view of human nature is that it neglects a seriousness of human sinfulness in considering human nature. First, Smart severely criticizes the moralistic approach to humanity in this way: "Moralism of every kind rests upon a superficial reading of the nature of human person."[93]  According to Smart, the assumption of moralism is that conduct is to be molded by the mind and the will without too much difficulty, and that what the child needs is to be shown plainly the difference between right and wrong.[94]  Therefore, according to moralism, humanity needs to only be inspired with noble ideals of what life should be to reach the educational ideals.[95]

According to Smart, moralists assert, "Inspire him [people] with noble ideals of what life should be, and, although he [people] may not realize them completely, his [their] life [lives] will be transformed by his [their] incessant endeavor to reach them."[96]  Accordingly, for the moralists, to suggest to people that they have not in themselves the power to reach the Christian ideal is to cut

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[93] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 161.

[94] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 161.

[95] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 161.

[96] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 161.

the nerve of their efforts.[97] Smart criticizes the moralistic understanding of human nature in this way:

> Moralism has in it a sub-Christian view of man.
> It fails to take account of how deep the roots
> of conduct are, and that disorder in conduct
> usually has beneath it, not just an ignorance
> of what is right, but a disorder in the self
> that renders it incapable of right action.[98]

Smart insists that the Christian doctrine of human imprisonment in sin alone takes account of the depth of the real problem of humanity.[99] "A passionate adherence to noble ideals," Smart continues, "may lead to self-deception, the person either modifying the Christian ideal to bring it within his [her] grasp or concealing from him[her]self how contrary his [her] actual life is to the ideals to which he [she] is committed."[100]

Smart, relying on the Christian doctrine, insists that "the natural people, in their proud self-centeredness, is incapable of living the life of the Kingdom [of God]."[101] Smart argues that to be poor in spirit, meek, merciful as God is merciful, and pure in heart, is beyond their competence. Therefore, according to Smart, there has to be a conquest of the self by the Spirit of God so that their lives begin to be

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[97] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 161.

[98] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 161.

[99] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 161.

[100] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 161.

[101] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 161.

lived from a new center, where their inmost selves bow in unconditional surrender under the sovereignty of God. Smart says, "In short, only where the sovereignty of God is established in this intimate personal way is the life of God's Kingdom possible."[102] As such, from Smart's perspective on humanity, the moralistic notion of humanity tends to provide a theological basis of humanity which loses one of the two synthetic elements of human nature, its sinfulness. Accordingly, in Smart's thought, this moralistic understanding of humanity is unrealistic in terms of anthropology, and not effective in terms of creating a comprehensive curriculum plan.

## Smart's Criticism of an Evangelistic View of Humanity

The key point of Smart's criticism of evangelistic view of human nature is that evangelists ignore the positive side of human nature as being of image of God, magnifying the negative aspect of human sinfulness. Smart begins his criticism on the evangelistic understanding of human nature like this: "Equally inadequate is the understanding of the human person in certain evangelistic approaches which have been, at times, widely operative in the church school."[103] Smart summarizes the basic assumption of the evangelistic notion regarding human nature as the idea that "the child is a sinner by nature from birth and, as such, is completely

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[102] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 161.

[103] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 162.

unable to understand anything of Christian faith."[104]  Smart asserts that according to the evangelistic view, human "blindness is total."[105]  Again, Smart says that for the evangelists, the only way in which this blindness of sin can be broken through is by conversion.  As a result of the assumption of human nature, the evangelist cannot help reaching a conclusion that trying to teach the child is futile.[106]  The only reasonable procedure is to use every possible opportunity to convict humanity of sin and to lead humanity to repentance and regeneration.[107]

With this critical observation of the evangelistic notion of human nature, Smart concludes that there are two main errors in the evangelistic approach to human nature.  One error is the evangelists' denial of what is affirmed in Scriptures, that humanity, in spite of its sin, remains the child of God.[108]  Smart cites Jesus' parable of the prodigal son in the gospel to reveal the evangelistic error in terms of a theological anthropology:

> The prodigal, returning from the far
> country, heard from his father not the words,
> "You are a sinner," but the gracious words,
> "Your are my son."  Therefore, no matter how
> deeply a man has fallen into sin, our point of

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[104] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 162.

[105] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 162.

[106] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 162.

[107] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 162.

[108] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 162.

contact with him is our knowledge that beneath
it all he is a child of God, and that, however
deeply broken his relationship with God may be,
he cannot break God's relationship with him.
He cannot deliver himself out of the hand of
God. He cannot cease to be God's creation. Our
entire approach to him must express, not
primarily condemnation of his sin, but
recognition of him as the child of God that he
is.[109]

In this way, Smart concludes that such an evangelistic view rests upon the assumption that until conversion, humanity is by nature a sinner, in complete isolation from God, rather than a child of God, belonging to God, but with the order of his life distorted and perverted by sin.[110] From his theological anthropology, Smart asserts that a doctrinaire denial that there can be any true faith or any knowledge of God until conversion has taken place, does violence to Christian truth at many points.[111]

According to Smart, the second error of the evangelists approach to human nature is in the sharp division made between the state of sin and the state of grace, and the idea that only by sudden conversion does anyone pass from the one to the other.[112] In Smart's idea, sin is the resistance of our human wills to God's will and it remains as a factor to be reckoned with as long as we live. So humanity never reaches

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[109] Smart, <u>Teaching Ministry</u>, 162.

[110] Smart, <u>Teaching Ministry</u>, 163.

[111] Smart, <u>Teaching Ministry</u>, 163.

[112] Smart, <u>Teaching Ministry</u>, 163.

a stage in its development when humanity will no longer have in honesty to bow before God and cry, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner."[113]

From this theological anthropology, Smart argues that the converted cannot take their stand above the sinner, pointing down at them with accusing finger, but will have to take their place humbly alongside them, united with them in need of the mercy of God. In that sense, Smart refuses the sharp evangelistic division between the state of sin and the state of grace as follows: "The Christian, no matter how soundly converted he [she] may be, is on the way to becoming a self-righteous Pharisee if he [she] has ceased to feel his [her] solidarity with his [her] fellow man [person] in sin."[114]

As such, from Smart's synthetic perspective on humanity, the conservative-evangelistic idea of humanity has a critical limitation, losing one of the two essential aspects of human nature, as being the image of God. From Smart's critical observation of the evangelistic view of humanity, we can find that the evangelistic understanding of human nature tends to fall into a theologically unrealistic notion of humanity, and supports an ineffective educational idea in creating a comprehensive curriculum plan.

## Smart's Criticism of a Liberal View of Humanity

The third false view of human nature, according to Smart,

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[113] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 163.

[114] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 163

is the optimistic approach to humanity of liberal theology and progressive education. Progressive education is supported by liberal theology. According to Smart, this liberal view of human nature is false because it overemphasizes the positive aspect of humanity as being the image of God and neglects its negative side as being sinner. Smart directs his criticism of liberal view of humanity with the following statement: "We turn now from one extreme to the other. In reaction to the moralistic and the evangelistic approach in the church school, there has grown up a type of education that has in it no place for any mention of sin, repentance, or conversion."[115]

According to Smart, this optimistic approach has a stronger appeal in a church school where most of the children have grown up in Christian homes, in which belief in God, respect for Jesus, and a fairly high standard of morality are part of the environment.[116] Smart continues, "Religiously and morally they are superior to most other children in the community, and they themselves would have difficulty in understanding why any radical repentance or conversion should be needed in their lives."[117] Accordingly, for the liberal optimist, sin and guilt, repentance and conversion, are appropriate to people who are irreligious and immoral, whose lives are a defiance of God, but not to the solid, respectable

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[115] Smart, *Teaching Ministry*, 163.

[116] Smart, *Teaching Ministry*, 164.

[117] Smart, *Teaching Ministry*, 164.

Christian folk of the community or their offspring.[118]

As such, it is clear that Smart's criticism is toward the optimistic approach to the children's education who have grown up in Christian homes. However, his more severe criticism of the liberal optimism is with the liberal's attempt to expand the optimism to humanity in general: "This optimism about the person who has a Christian background is, by some, extended to man [humanity] in general, and we begin then to hear that man [humanity] is by nature good."[119] The optimists insist that humanity does not intend evil, but falls into it as a consequence of inadequate education and perverted institutions. Accordingly, humanity requires, not redemption, but only enlightenment.

Smart summarizes the optimists' view of human nature in this way: "Give him [people] the education he [they] deserves and purify the economic and political structure of society, if you wish to establish the Kingdom of God on earth."[120] Smart criticizes liberal optimists by saying: "They are totally unable to take account of the phenomena with which we are confronted in our fellow men [people] and in ourselves."[121] Smart points out the false notion of humanity of the liberal optimism: "In a time such as the present, when the reality of

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[118] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 164.

[119] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 164.

[120] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 164.

[121] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 164.

evil as a force working from within men [humanity] compels the attention of the world, such romantic conceptions of human nature have a hollow ring."[122] From his synthetic perspective, Smart asserts that Coe and other representatives of the religious educational movement were overly romantic in their understanding of humanity, offering a false appraisal of human reason and its ability to extricate humanity from the problems which it faces.

As mentioned above, in Smart's thought, the evangelists, the moralists, and the liberals are good examples of two extremes regarding human nature, one pessimistic, the two others optimistic. According to Smart, the three approaches fail to grasp the true nature of humanity, because they emphasize one aspect of the two paradoxical human natures, while ignoring the other. From Smart's perspective, the mistakes of these three approaches to human nature are due to their failure to have a synthetic mechanism through which two mutually different elements can be combined in one system. In that sense, Smart's paradoxical, synthetic understanding of human nature becomes an effective mechanism for a realistic understanding of human nature in creating a comprehensive religious curriculum.

### Paradox in Understanding Human Nature and Designing Educational Program

The close relationship between the understanding of human

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[122] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 164.

nature and an educational plan is clearly observed in Smart's case. Actually, Smart begins to describe his approach to Christian education by first asserting a relationship between the understanding of human nature and the method of Christian education. Smart asserts that "a Christian doctrine of humanity is basic to any program of Christian education. A program that operates with something less than, or other than, a Christian understanding of persons is likely to produce something less than or other than Christian persons."[123]

"It should not be difficult," Smart says,

to recognize the importance of the
doctrine of man [humanity] for our entire
approach to Christian education. An
inadequate doctrine of man [humanity] means
an inadequate understanding both of
ourselves and of those whom we teach. To
teach effectively we must know our pupils
from the inside.[124]

The pursuit of a comprehensive understanding of human nature in terms of religious education is not only Smart's exclusive concern. Throughout the history of religious education, many theorists have been concerned with a comprehensive view of human nature as a sound basis of theory and practice of religious education. Many Christian comprehensive understandings of humanity have been expressed in paradoxical descriptions of the dual nature humanity. Randolph C. Miller's is one of those. Miller says:

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[123] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 157.

[124] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 160.

> This view of humanity is a balanced one,
> and yet it is paradoxical. It sees a human
> being as a child of God and still as sinner;
> as able to achieve goodness in freedom and yet
> only by the grace of God; as seeking God's
> kingdom on earth and yet seeing the kingdom as
> God's act; as in a tragic human situation and
> yet living the abundant life now; as saved
> through the redeemable love of God and yet
> needing to be saved through repentance and
> committmental as an individual and yet finding
> sanctuary in the religious community; as loved
> of God and yet suffering God's judgment. This
> is the paradox of our human predicament.[125]

Arguing that the paradox in human nature should never be lost in our consideration of the nature of humanity, John C. Bennett explains two contrasting understandings of human nature as follows:

> There is an Augustinian tradition which
> paints man [humanity] as a sinner, with sin
> on every level of spiritual attainment; and
> this means that every form of Utopianism is
> an illusion; thus, we are brought up against
> the need for continuous repentance. But we
> must remember also that there is an essential
> goodness in man [humanity] which is not
> destroyed when it is corrupted.[126]

In fact, the two most prominent Christian views of human nature are the image of God and the fallen sinner, which are mutually contradictory notions. According to Vieth, the distinctive Christian faith language describing the twofold nature of humanity refers to people as children of God, made

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[125] Randolph C. Miller, "The Discovery of Resistance and Resource," in The Church and Organized Movements, ed. Randolph C. Miller (New York: Harper & Row, 1946), 6.

[126] John C. Bennett, "The Christian Conception of Man," in Liberal Theology, eds. David E. Roberts and Henry P. Van Dusen (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), 203-04.

in the divine image, on the other hand, as fallen creatures on the other.[127]   In relating the dual nature of humanity to religious education programs, Vieth maintains that it is of the greatest importance for religious educators to restore the proper balance between these two natures.

> We should never give up the conviction
> that we are dealing with the children of God
> who are growing up within the body of Christ.
> Man [humanity] can be sinful only because he
> [it] is a child of God.  On the other hand,
> the empirical investigations which lay bare
> man's [human] brutality and pride, his [its]
> sensuality and neurotic characteristics,
> lend strong confirmation to what the
> theologians were trying to express through
> the doctrine of original sin.  A sound
> program of Christian education must take
> into consideration this dual nature of man
> [humanity].[128]

For H. Shelton Smith, the dual nature of humanity is also essential in creating a realistic program of religious education. In Smith's thought, a realistic understanding of human nature requires humanity to see itself as both child of God and sinner, and not merely as one or the other.[129]   This conviction of Smith is rooted in his idea that humanity, in its original existence, was created in the divine image so as to be in full fellowship with God, but humanity lost this original divine communion through disobedience.[130]

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[127] Vieth, "Foundations of Christian Education," 55.

[128] Vieth, "Foundations of Christian Education," 56.

[129] H. Shelton Smith, 95.

[130] H. Shelton Smith, 95.

From a paradoxical, synthetic perspective of human nature, any interpretation of humanity which loses a paradoxical perspective is unrealistic in establishing a sound religious education program. In this connection, Smith's rejection of conservative-evangelistic and progressive-liberal understandings of human nature is a typical attitude of those who pursue a comprehensive notion of human nature: "A paradoxical view of human existence may be lost either by an overemphasis upon human goodness [in the liberal idea] or upon human depravity [in Protestant orthodoxy]."[131]

As such, a paradoxically synthetic understanding of human nature can be thought of as one of the ideal concepts through which many theorists of religious education have sought a theologically comprehensive basis for religious education. In that sense, Smart's paradoxical understanding of human nature can be regarded as one of the best paradigms, clearly showing how we can transcend narrow views of humanity which hinder us from creating a comprehensive anthropology and a theoretical basis for effective religious curriculum.

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[131] H. Shelton Smith, 95.

## Chapter 4

### Functional Relationship between Understanding of
### Human Nature and Curriculum Nature

Historically, many religious education theorists have put forth the fact that the understanding of humanity is an influential factor in considering educational program. In that sense, it is not new to suggest the existence of a functional relationship between the understanding of human nature and the nature of religious curriculum. Throughout this chapter, we will first examine the contributions and limitations of two extreme anthropologies--evangelistic and liberal--focusing more on their functional limitations in designing a comprehensive religious curriculum. Then, the value of a paradoxically synthetic anthropology will be discussed.

In the functional connection, the core question arises: What are the values and limitations of the curriculum ideas which are connected with some specific anthropological assumptions? More specifically, the real issues of this question are: (1) When we follow one of the two extreme anthropologies--consciously or unconsciously--in designing religious education, why will our religious curriculum become narrow? and (2) How can we have a more comprehensive curriculum with a paradoxically synthetic anthropology? As such, this discussion goes on to reveal the value of a comprehensive understanding of human nature in resolving the narrowly envisioned religious curriculum.

The four intensive issues in resolving the curriculum functional relationship, discussed in chapter two, are good loci in which the functional relationships between anthropology and curriculum issues are concretely explored: the nature of content, grouping principles, aims, and teaching-learning model(s).[1]    Before entering this examination, we need to confess that all of these four issues will not represent the functional relationship with anthropology with the same intensity.  The intensity of some issues might be very strong in relation to anthropology, and for some other issues, the functional relationships will be less intense or visible.

## Nature of Curriculum Content

As discussed previously, the antithetical issue of the nature of curriculum content emerges as a question of content-as-knowledge versus content-as-experience.  This issue has also been illustrated in other expressions: content as curriculum versus content as experience, a subject-matter-centered curriculum versus a life-centered curriculum.[2]  In religious education, the struggle to identify the nature of curriculum content has tended to focus on the question of "bible-centered" versus "life-centered" materials.[3]  The knowledge-centered curriculum begins with an emphasis on the

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[1] Osterman, 530-37.

[2] Wyckoff, "Curriculum and the Church School," 105.

[3] Osterman, 532.

importance of such things as the Bible, catechisms, and doctrines. On the other hand, the experience-centered curriculum puts the educational importance in the life situations of the learners including their needs and interests.[4]

According to John P. Portelli, one of the principal tenets of the proponents for understanding curriculum as knowledge is that the curriculum content consists of certain cumulative traditions of organized knowledge. This argument is grounded in a conviction that there are certain essential subject matters that the learners should know in order to be educated.[5] Translated into the context of religious education, the content, as subject-matter which is to be presented to the learner, consists of sacred writings, documents, tenets, religious history, dogma, theology, and Christian beliefs which become the important resources of the religious curriculum.[6] The proponents of the knowledge-centered curriculum highly value the transmission of the content of the Bible or doctrine itself as an important task of religious education. They even say that the mere learning of the stories and texts from the Bible and memorizing the Biblical passages are sufficient for the learners at certain

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[4] Osterman, 532.

[5] Portelli, "Perspectives and Imperatives," 357.

[6] D. Campbell Wyckoff, The Gospel and Christian Education (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1959), 89.

ages.[7]    As such, for the proponents of the idea of this knowledge-centered curriculum, the principle proposal is transmission of the knowledge of the content of the Bible or doctrine.

Educationally, the evangelistic understanding of humanity often becomes a theoretical basis for the idea of knowledge-centered religious curriculum.  We can read one example of it in the fact that Jonathan Edwards' evangelical interpretation of human nature may give a strong support for the idea of the knowledge-centered curriculum, and more specifically, a Bible-centered curriculum.  Edwards had not participated in this particular discussion of religious curriculum programming. However, from his religious writings, we can draw many clues which show the existence of the relevance of Edwards' thought to religious curriculum, and particularly to knowledge-based curriculum.

Grady Temp Sparkman explains the essential contribution of Edwards' ministry to religious education like this:

> [In Edwards' thought,] the goal of
> education--preaching, Bible study,
> catechizing--is that man [humanity] may
> have knowledge of divinity, may understand
> the meaning of the facts of religion, may
> practice religion, and that his [her] soul
> might be saved from sin's ruin.[8]

In fact, in Edwards' instruction to the children, the ultimate concern is soul-saving--human salvation from sin's ruin.

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[7] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 118.

[8] Sparkman, 48.

Edwards makes this ultimate goal of his religious instruction in his farewell sermon: "Only I desire you not to forget, but often think of the counsels and warnings I have given you, and the endeavors I have used, that your souls might be saved from everlasting destruction."[9] In this connection, Edwards' basic assumption regarding on human nature is that humanity is seriously depraved and cannot save itself or come to divine truth on its own. Only through God's initiative, Jesus Christ's saving work, and the discipline of the individual, can humanity be saved.[10]

In Edwards' thought, humanity urgently needs divine-spiritual knowledge for its salvation, which is the ultimate goal of his religious instruction. According to Edwards, the divine knowledge for salvation is taught in the Bible.[11] Actually, Edwards gives the Bible the highest place in terms of finding true spiritual knowledge because he believes that the Bible contains the divine knowledge needed for salvation. Writing of the great business of religion, Edwards says that the divine knowledge "is taught by God him[her]self in a certain book that he [God] hath given for that end, full of instruction."[12] Later in this same discussion Edwards writes: "By means of all, God hath given a book of divine

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[9] Edwards, Works, 1:78.

[10] Edwards, Works, 1:303-06.

[11] Edwards, Works, 4:441.

[12] Edwards, Works, 4:3.

instructions, which contains the sum of divinity."[13]   For

Edwards, "it is only the word of God, contained in the Old and

New Testament, which teaches us Christian divinity."[14]   As

such, in Edwards' evangelism, the belief that the saving

knowledge is taught in the Bible can become a theoretical clue

which favors the knowledge-centered religious curriculum.

According to William C. Bower, an early contributor to

Religious Education who helped shape the young Religious

Education Association, the knowledge-centered curriculum is a

distortion of religious education because it places knowledge

at the center of the learning process.[15]   In addition, the

knowledge-centered     curriculum    has    amounted     to    the

identification of education with instruction.   As a result,

the focus of attention of religious education is wrongly

centered, making education an adjustment to the inheritance of

the race.[16]   Likewise, according to Bower, the adjustment

which  this  knowledge-centered  curriculum  seeks  is  to

materials, alienating the learner's present situation of an

ongoing human life.[17]   This curriculum also tends to close the

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[13] Edwards, Works, 4:8.

[14] Edwards, Works, 4:3.

[15] William Clayton Bower, The Curriculum of Religious Education (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), 20.

[16] Bower, 20.

[17] Bower, 20.

avenues to fresh and vital experience.[18] Furthermore, the knowledge-centered curriculum promotes the passive attitude, forming the receptive qualities of the learner's mind.[19]

Drawing from Smart's idea, the conservative-evangelistic understanding of human nature is strong in defining the traditional value of the religious content to be taught, such as the Bible in religious education. However, as seen in Edwards' idea, the idea of curriculum as knowledge is limited in the fact that this curriculum does not have theoretical room for the value of the learner's motives, needs, or interests due to its overly pessimistic evaluation of human nature. According to the pessimism regarding humanity, such things as learner's motives and interests cannot be an worthy of salvation as the ultimate goal of religious education. This means that the conservative-evangelistic understanding of human nature easily alienates the educational value of learner's motives, interests, and needs in planning a comprehensive religious curriculum. Viewed from these perspectives, the knowledge-centered curriculum idea needs a new anthropological mechanism to transcend its educational limitations in considering an effective religious curriculum in terms of comprehensiveness.

The experience-centered curriculum idea provides an effective mechanism which resolves the limitations of the

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[18] Bower, 20-21.

[19] Bower, 21.

knowledge-centered curriculum idea. According to D. Campbell Wyckoff, the experience-centered curriculum theorists' basic tenet is that real education takes place as the experience of the learner expands and is refined and directed. Thus, all education should begin and take direction from hints that come from the experience of the learners themselves.[20] Accordingly, the curriculum should be based upon the experience of the learner growing out of the learner's total interaction with their objective world.[21]

Translated into the context of religious education, the experience-centered curriculum theorist argues that the curriculum content is not a block of subject-matter such as the Bible or doctrine. Instead, the curriculum content should be a unit of experience moving from an identifiable situation to its outcome in a Christian response. Furthermore, the curriculum content also needs to contain various resources, such as the religious experience of the past as preserved in sacred literature, the history of Christian thought, the cultic acts and symbols of Christianity, and the development of its institutions.[22] Such resources from the past are not the end of the learning process but is a means for the interpretation and management of experience. As such, according to this experience-centered curriculum, even the

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[20] Wyckoff, Task of Christian Education, 51.

[21] Bower and Hayward, 71.

[22] Bower and Hayward, 71-72.

Bible fulfills its end only when it is re-lived in the learner's present life experience.[23]

In an anthropological sense, this experience-centered curriculum is very positive in interpreting the learner's innate potential in educational practice. This is because the experience-centered curriculum theorists believe that the learner's activities and experiences have an intrinsic worth in themselves in educational practice.[24] According to Smart, the progressive education movement, which is considerably supported by liberal understanding of humanity, strongly proposes the experience-centered religious education program. For example, George A. Coe places his educational plan in such a progressive assumption of education. According to Coe, learning is not complete until the learners are able to respond to what is being taught and appropriate it for themselves through some form of action. In this connection, in Coe's idea, a true religious education begins with the beginning of experience, and it goes forward with experience.[25] Coe's educational ideas which place an educationally high value on the learner's life experience are closely related with his theological idea of humanity, and more specifically the child.

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[23] Betts, "Curriculum of Religious Education," 6.

[24] Frank M. McKibben, "Trends in Progressive Religious Education," Religious Education 34 (1939): 131.

[25] Coe, Education in Religion and Morals, 207.

Coe's basic tenet of human nature relating to his educational plan is that divinity is in humanity. Education which is based on the assumption that the child is within the kingdom also assumes that the child has a positive religious nature.[26] In educational connection, in Coe's thought, the child should be understood as a being who has more than a passive capacity for spiritual things. Furthermore, Coe interprets that the successive phases in the growth of the child personality may be, and normally are, so many phases of a growing consciousness of the divine meaning of life.[27]

Coe's high valuing of the learner's experience does not imply that historical material is unimportant. In fact, for Coe, historical material should perform its function in assisting in the solution of present problems. Thus, Coe says, "Here, then, is the fundamental conception: Pupil experience of real situations; of the problems that they involve; of real thinking; of making plans, carrying them through, and judging the whole-this as the main body of the curriculum."[28]

Coe points out that even educators using the project approach must ask themselves about the superior values that the educators hope for learners to discover with the

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[26] Coe, *Education in Religion and Morals*, 61.

[27] Coe, *Education in Religion and Morals*, 62.

[28] Coe, "Opposing Theories of the Curriculum," 150.

educator's help.[29] This means that teachers need to insert something into the present life situation of their students, something that will improve their present experience, and has an expansive effect upon it, something that produces dissatisfactions that do not naturally arise: "Shall it be positive or negative, symmetrical or distorted, repressive or emancipating?"[30] In Coe's view, the special value of the Bible is in the fact that it is one of the most useful materials in doing the latter, suggesting problems that are not already thought of by the learners.[31]

The experience-centered curriculum is valuable in the sense that this approach becomes an effective mechanism to resolve the limitations of the knowledge-centered approach, which is often rooted in ignorance of the educational value of the learner's life experience. However, experience-centered curriculum also has critical problems. One of the most critical problems is the fact that this experience-centered curriculum idea is too broad when applied to the concrete practice of education. Portelli writes:

> Are all the experiences, desirable or not,
> relevant to learning or not, included? Is the
> school really responsible for each experience
> of every student? While an unqualified
> affirmative is out of the question, a negative
> response requires criteria for distinguishing

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[29] George Albert Coe, What is Christian Education? (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), 188.

[30] Coe, Education in Religion and Morals, 207.

[31] Coe, What is Christian Education?, 194.

the relevant from the non-relevant. The criteria are not included in the experiences definitions.[32]

According to George H. Betts, one of the early Religious Education Association leaders, the conglomerate of experience from the lives of humanity is not of equal worth. Some of it possesses permanent value, some is but temporary. This means that the experiences of learners are to be selected out and placed in order for the learner to learn.[33] The critical problem of the idea of the experience-centered curriculum is in the fact that if the selection and placement of the learner's experience is inappropriate, the situation cannot help but fall into chaos.

In an anthropological sense, this experience-centered curriculum idea easily tends to neglect the fact that the learner's present motives, interests, and needs might not be in accordance with a fulfillment of the learner's self-realization--human salvation in evangelistic language. From this perspective, the liberal understanding of humanity, which supports this experience-centered curriculum, also needs a new mechanism to transcend anthropological limitations in programming a comprehensive religious curriculum

As such, both ideas which are based either on evangelical pessimism or on liberal optimism have theoretical limitations in creating a comprehensive curriculum theory in terms of

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[32] Portelli, "Perspectives and Imperatives," 360.

[33] Betts, "Curriculum of Religious Education," 5.

curriculum content. From that perspective, Smart's synthetic approach to religious curriculum becomes an effective device in considering a comprehensive curriculum theory. This is because Smart proposes a comprehensive curriculum idea which transcends the limitations of both knowledge-centered and experience-centered curriculum through acknowledging the values of the two curriculum ideas.

In terms of curriculum content, in the first place, Smart goes with the knowledge-centered curriculum idea, pointing out that the Bible is paramount for religious education. This idea is closely connected to his educational thought that Christian education must be grounded in the Bible.[34] More specifically, for Smart, the Bible has an essential value as the unique resource at which religious curriculum should be aimed:[35] "The Scriptures are central in the curriculum."[36]

Smart's high regard of the Bible in religious education is closely connected to his understanding of the Bible. The ultimate aim of religious education, for Smart, is fulfillment of God's saving work, more specifically human salvation. The Bible shows the way of salvation.[37] For Smart, the Bible is the medium of God's revelation through the ages, and the Bible

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[34] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 116.

[35] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 117.

[36] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 118.

[37] James D. Smart, The Church Must Teach ... or Die (Philadelphia: Board of Christian Education, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1947), 37-38

is the way through which God comes to humanity.[38] In other words, the Bible is unique in terms of God's revelation showing the way of salvation, as the ultimate aim of religious education: "It [The Bible] is not one among many revelations of God which are to be set in line with each other and weighed and compared."[39] Smart continues:

> But we create a serious illusion if
> we leave in men's minds the impression
> that there is any other way, any direct
> and unmediated way, for us to find access
> to this reality of revelation in history
> except through the reading and the
> exposition of the text of Scripture
> itself.[40]

In this connection, Smart definitely argues that "Close the Scriptures, and that God, who alone is the God of Christians, is unknown. And where he [God] is unknown, the life that he [God] alone gives to men [people] through faith in him [God] is unknown."[41] Therefore, in Smart's thought, when the Bible becomes a closed book, the way of salvation is ceased to be known: "Only where there is an open Bible is the Christian God truly known."[42]

The anthropological relevance to religious curriculum is observed in Smart's idea that humanity, as a fallen sinner,

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[38] Smart, <u>Teaching Ministry</u>, 117-18.

[39] Smart, <u>Teaching Ministry</u>, 118.

[40] James D. Smart, <u>The Strange Silence of the Bible in the Church</u> (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1970), 143.

[41] Smart, <u>Teaching Ministry</u>, 118.

[42] Smart, <u>Church Must Teach</u>, 38.

urgently needs the Bible, as God's saving Words. Without God's grace for salvation, according to Smart, humanity cannot be saved, and no one fulfills the ultimate goal of religious education. Likewise, without the Bible, nobody can know the way to salvation. Therefore, from Smart's anthropological and educational thought, it is possible to draw out the idea that in the first place, religious curriculum should contain the saving Words of the Bible. For Smart, the saving knowledge of the Bible as curriculum content is urgently needed in regard to human nature in terms of its limitation in saving itself. As such, in the first place, Smart's voice about the role of the Bible in human salvation is parallel to Edwards' evangelistic idea. Furthermore, Smart's idea of the curriculum content comprehends the evangelistic curriculum idea which is knowledge--more specifically Bible--centered.

Although Smart deeply appreciates the value of the knowledge of the Bible as content of curriculum, this is only half of Smart's curriculum thought. This means that Smart never ignores the educational value of the learner's needs or life experience in curriculum planning. Smart's appreciation of the value of the learner's experience in curriculum planning is revealed in his criticism of his contemporary Bible study based on the knowledge-centered education. Criticizing this Bible study method, which was popular in his day, Smart points out that the heaping up of information about what is in the Bible does not necessarily lead to a Christian

knowledge of God, which is necessary for human salvation.[43]

According to Smart, the Bible study which is based on the knowledge-centered, more specifically Bible-centered, education tells the learners certain facts about people and events in Bible times. According to Smart, this kind of educational program does not become for the learner a book through which God speaks to the learner and comes as a living, redeeming God into the midst of the learner's present life.[44] This means, in Smart's thought, ignoring the value of the learner's life experience, the Bible cannot become the saving Word of God. A learner may be familiarized with the contents of the Bible, but remain totally ignorant of God.[45] The aim of religious education is distorted.

As such, in Smart's educational thought, the issue of religious curriculum content is not an either/or question. Smart deeply appreciates the importance of a close co-ordination between the knowledge to be studied in the church and the present life experience of the learner.[46] In other words, in Smart's view, it is pointless for curriculum theorists to debate whether the religious curriculum should be Bible-centered or experience-centered.[47] Transcending Coe's

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[43] Smart, <u>Teaching Ministry</u>, 118.

[44] Smart, <u>Church Must Teach</u>, 23.

[45] Smart, <u>Teaching Ministry</u>, 118.

[46] Smart, <u>Teaching Ministry</u>, 169.

[47] Smart, <u>Teaching Ministry</u>, 109.

anthropological limitation, which neglects the seriousness of human sinfulness, Smart suggests a synthetic anthropology, in which the learner, as a fallen sinner, needs divine knowledge as curriculum content which is necessary for salvation. At the same time, resolving Edwardian anthropological limitation, which neglects the positive aspect of humanity as being the image of God, Smart constructs a more comprehensive anthropology, in which the learner, as a child of God, can put forth his or her own life experience in educational practice to reflect on and cultivate it in the light of God's saving will. In that sense, Smart's paradoxical understanding of human nature, a synthesis of the two natures of humanity, becomes an effective anthropological basis in transcending the narrow curriculum ideas and creating a comprehensive religious curriculum.

### Age Grouping Principle of the Curriculum

Age grouping is another curriculum issue, involving a tension between uniform and graded curriculum resources. In religious education, a uniform curriculum resource is one in which the same text is studied by all ages at a given time, using similar approach.[48] A graded curriculum is one in which a different text and different approaches are provided to the learners according to their ages.

In an anthropological sense, the most critical issue in considering the grouping principle of curriculum involves age.

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[48] Lankard, 201.

A basic tenet of the uniform curriculum system is that a religious lesson can serve the learners of all ages. In a practical sense, age is not the only element in determining the grouping of curriculum. The elements that determines the religious curriculum grouping are various, including the number of teachers, the learners, their financial situation, or facility condition. In Murch's observation, only a comparatively few schools are equipped to teach the graded lessons in an ideal fashion because of the lack of teachers, learners or classrooms.[49] Actually, even the most beautifully developed religious curriculum which is based on graded principles is useless for many churches or denominations of the third world countries which cannot procure the appropriate personnel and material resources. They cannot afford even to enjoy the graded curriculum materials.

In religious education, the Biblical content is one of the most basic to curriculum.[50] The case of this uniform curriculum is strongly related to the understanding of the Bible. According to the uniform curriculum principle, the religious learner will be benefitted by the mere quantity of the Bible with which the learner is familiar.[51] According to

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[49] James DeForest Murch, Christian Education and the Local Church, rev. ed. (Cincinnati: Standard Publishing Co., 1958), 212.

[50] Wyckoff, Gospel and Christian Education, 62.

[51] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 148.

Smart, all of the Bible is good for all people regardless of
their age since it is God's Word.  In the uniform curriculum
assumption, this means that if the Bible is good for adults,
it should be good for young children.[52]  This idea is closely
connected with the evangelistic conviction that the landmark
truths of the Bible are open to persons of all ages.[53]

Another tenet of the uniform principle of curriculum is
connected to the understanding of the relationship between
human salvation and the Bible.  Criticizing the earnest
teachers who neglect the importance of grading in religious
instruction, Smart explains that these uniform-centered
educators think that it is the Bible that makes people wise
unto salvation.[54]  Therefore, according to the uniform-
centered educators, even a simple but effective way of
providing for the learner's salvation is to fill the learner
with texts from the Bible, whether or not the leaner
understands what they learn does not matter.  The Bible will
be like a seed in the learner's mind and one day what the
learner learns about the Bible will sprout and grow.[55]  In
one word, for those who adopt the uniformed-curriculum, "The
Bible is the same for seven-year-old Mary as it was for

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[52] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 147.

[53] Elias, 40.

[54] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 147.

[55] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 147.

seventy-year-old great-grandmother."[56]

The existence of an anthropological relevance in uniform curriculum is clearly demonstrated in Smart's statement about the evangelists' option of the uniform lesson. According to Smart, a extreme pessimism regarding human nature goes to the idea that the age of learner needs not to be considered seriously in religious education.[57] In his interpretation of the evangelistic understanding of human nature, every learner is thoroughly a sinner, completely unable to understand anything of Christian truth. In fact, according to the evangelistic view, it is even futile to try to teach the learner. The only reasonable procedure is to use every possible opportunity to convince the learner of his or her sin and to lead the learner to repentance and regeneration: "The age of the child is of no importance. A four-year-old sinner, a fourteen-year-old sinner, and a twenty-four-year-old sinner are all in equal peril and their only hope is conversion."[58] This anthropological pessimism, according to Smart, can become a theoretical base which alienates the values of the graded principle in the development of curriculum for religious education.

Graded lessons arose in the educators' critical

[56] John M. Price, James H. Chapman, A. E. Tibbs, and L. L. Carpenter, A Survey of Religious Education (New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1940), 122.

[57] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 162.

[58] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 162.

recognition that the uniform lesson disregarded the principle of adaptation to the learner. Accordingly, the graded lesson suggests some different assumptions from those of the uniform lesson in considering religious educational practice. According to Coe, those assumptions include respect for the learner's capacity to appreciate meanings, attention to stages of growth, (particularly the characteristic moral and religious problems at different age-periods), and a better and more detailed application of the theory of interest.[59]

Wyckoff later upholds these important tenets of graded-curriculum in religious education. He envisions the whole curriculum design in this way. First, the graded lesson uses the Bible in relation to life situations at the various age levels. Second, the graded lesson tries to practice religious education by the achievement of sequence, balance, and comprehensiveness by taking into account the maturing interests and experiences of the various age levels, the anticipation of emerging needs, and seasonal emphases. Third, the graded lesson pursues the integration of the lessons within the total program of the age group.[60]

In general, there are two kinds of graded lessons: the closely graded lesson and the group graded one. In closely graded lessons, the principle of gradation is carried one step

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[59] George A. Coe, "Why the Dissatisfaction with Existing Curricula?" _Religious Education_ 21 (1926): 568.

[60] Wyckoff, _Theory and Design_, 33.

further, and a separate course of lesson is provided for each year. One purpose of the closely graded lesson is preparing for a program of Christian education correlated to the experience and religious needs of the learners, and paralleling their year-by-year growth and development.[61]

The group graded curriculum, also called "departmental graded" or "cycle graded",[62] groups the learners into departments, with a typical age span of three years. On any given Sunday all the learners of one department, such as the primary, have the same lesson, while the learners in the junior, junior high school, or other departments each have different lessons.[63] The purpose of the group graded lessons is to combine the principle of uniformity with the principle of grading.[64] Actually, the hope of the Group Graded Lesson Committee was that the churches, using the uniform lesson, would find their needs met by the uniformity and biblical content of the group graded lesson.[65]

In reality, the graded lesson heavily depends on the insights and theories of such theorists as John Dewey, William James, E. L. Thorndike, and more concretely, developmental

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[61] National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S.A., _A Guide for Curriculum in Christian Education_ (Chicago: Special Committee on the Curriculum Guide, NCC, 1955), 125.

[62] Vieth, "Curriculum of Christian Education," 136.

[63] Vieth, "Curriculum of Christian Education," 136-37.

[64] Bower and Hayward, 70.

[65] Bower and Hayward, 70.

psychologists. Their approaches to education became pervasive in public education during the early twentieth century. For them, foremost was the need to take account of motivation, stages of maturity and gradations of learning ability. Taking seriously the developmental needs of each age group, religious educators prepared Sunday school materials and teaching guides for different age groups. Pleasant physical surroundings conducive to learning at each particular age were recommended.[66]

As such, historically, a graded lesson was developed with a recognition that a system of education that would take into account both the needs of the learner and the way in which the learner most naturally grows would have to be carefully graded.[67] This recognition went further to the conclusion that the different age groups need to be separated from each other and the curriculum of each group worked out according to what teacher find the learner can most readily and profitably learn.[68]

From a theological perspective, we can confirm that the graded curriculum takes a radically different attitude from the conservative-evangelistic one. This is not unrelated to the fact that the progressive education movement, which

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[66] Robert W. Lynn and Elliot Wright, The Big Little School (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980), 126.

[67] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 56.

[68] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 56.

favored the graded curriculum, was supported by liberal theology, which did not deeply appreciate the conservative-evangelistic pessimistic tenet of anthropology. More specifically, in considering curriculum plans, the conservative-evangelistic anthropology focuses on the universal depravity of humanity and proposes the uniform idea. Whereas, the graded theorists, who favor the developmental psychology, deeply appreciate the educational potentials of the learner at each stage.

As shown previously, in creating a comprehensive religious curriculum, the either/or thinking of curriculum grouping--uniform and graded--is limited and undesirable because of its exclusive nature. This means that in order to create a more effective religious curriculum, we need a comprehensive mechanism which transcends the critical limitations of the two extremes in terms of curriculum grouping. First of all, this comprehensive curriculum mechanism should be one which acknowledges the cognitive differences according to age-levels of growth with their interests and capacities.[69] This new mechanism should also transcend the limitation of the uniform lesson that tends to neglect the learner's situation, with indifference to the educational processes of the learner's age.[70] In addition, the new mechanism for a comprehensive curriculum should be

[69] Bower and Hayward, 68.

[70] Betts, "Curriculum of Religious Education," 11.

one which resolves the lack of both unity and continuity of the graded curriculum,[71] and the limitation in fulfilling an intergenerational vision of religious education, which offers help to congregations to extend the children's materials to intergenerational experiences.[72]

In that sense, the real value of Smart's idea in curriculum grouping is in the fact that he deeply appreciates the values of the both principles of uniform and graded of religious curriculum, not overlooking those limitations in the both at the same time. First, Smart's implication of the value of the uniform curriculum principle can be read from his warning of the possible danger of the graded lesson which might lose the central themes of religious education. He writes:

> There is constantly a danger that neither teachers nor pupils will ever look at the life of Christ or the story of the Bible or the story of the Church as a whole, and thus they will not see the true relationship of all the details to each other. Because each separate lesson commands the attention, the great central themes which should run through and bind together all the teaching tend to be lost from sight.[73]

Smart's pointing out the critical problems is a sign which shows that Smart does not ignore the value of the uniform lesson in religious education. According to Smart,

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[71] Betts, "Curriculum of Religious Education," 14.

[72] Osterman, 534.

[73] Smart, Church Must Teach, 19.

worship and hymns which neglected the value of the graded lesson were the factors which let the children and the teenagers move away from the church: "The worship of the Christian congregation is not for them [the children]. So at least they feel, and thereby one of the main agencies of Christian education is made of no effect so far as they are concerned."[74] Smart continues to say that "Perhaps they have never learned in church school the hymns that are used in the church, so they find it hard to participate in the congregation's singing."[75]

As such, in the first place, Smart deeply appreciates the necessity of the uniform lesson principle in creating the religious curriculum. However, in the second place, Smart does not neglect the value of graded lesson principle. Rather, Smart argues positively that grading is necessary in the use of the Bible.[76] Actually, Smart even identifies that a basic purpose of grading is that educators do not try to make the learner take any step in the learner's pilgrimage into the Bible until the learner is ready for it.[77]

Smart's appreciation of the value of the graded lesson comes from his realization of the danger of the education which is supported by the uniform principle of curriculum.

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[74] Smart, Church Must Teach, 24.

[75] Smart, Church Must Teach, 24.

[76] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 148.

[77] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 148.

Smart realized that when learners were told a story or made to learn a text which is completely beyond their comprehension, they were given the impression of a book that they could not understand even if they tried very hard. The critical result of the frequent repetition of this experience deepens the impressions sharply so that, very early in life, the Bible becomes for the learner the acme of incomprehensibility.[78]

In this connection, Smart highly appreciates the achievement of psychological studies, which provided the theoretical bases of the graded lesson. According to Smart, the psychological studies of the child established a body of facts concerning the stages in a child's development and recognized the injury that could be done to a child by forcing upon him [her] decisions and experiences for which he [she] was not yet ready. Also, the psychological studies of child are informed that all of them do not grow at the same rate and each must be permitted to take whatever time he [she] needs to move from one stage to the next.[79]

As such, in considering a religious curriculum, Smart does not ignore any value of the two curriculum principles of uniform and graded, not overemphasizing one's value. On the one hand, in criticizing the ineffectiveness of the uniform lesson which is supported by evangelistic pessimism regarding human nature, Smart refers to the necessity and value of the

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[78] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 147.

[79] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 154.

graded lesson.  On the other hand, recognizing the danger of
the graded lesson which might lose the unity and continuity of
religious education, Smart deeply appreciates the necessity
and value of the uniform lesson.  This means that Smart's
educational approach can become a more effective basis in
creating a comprehensive religious curriculum.  From an
anthropological perspective, we can say that this can be
possible because Smart is free from the two extreme views of
evangelism and liberalism through his synthetic position of
anthropology.

### The Aims of the Curriculum

Another curriculum component, and controversial issue, is
the aim of the curriculum.  In terms of the aim of religious
education, the tension between two controversial issues have
been expressed in various dichotomous ideas, such as
individual redemption versus a social salvation, a tradition-
keeping education versus a transformation-provoking one,
transmission of the faith from one generation to the other
versus a development of the fullest religious life of the
learner now.  Among them, one of the most prominent tensions,
related to the understanding of human nature, involves the two
extremes of religious education-- conversion as the aim of
religious education and growth as the aim of religious
education.[80]

The tension between a conversion-centered aim of

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[80] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 163-66

religious education and a growth-centered one is the clearest clue to identify the conflict between the evangelistic and liberal understanding of aim of the religious curriculum. According to the notion of conversion as the aim of religious education, the whole educational practice is focused on the learner's conversion. In other words, the conversion-centered notion of the aim of religious education is concentrated on the instant in which the learner experiences a conversion. Whereas, the notion of a growth as the aim of religious education is mainly concerned in the moral and spiritual growth of learners through a developmental process.

One of the clearest examples of the relevance of anthropology to the aim of religious education is found in Coe's criticism of the doctrine of total depravity in its unrelieved form. According to Coe, the doctrine of total depravity contradicts the idea of religious education which pursues moral spiritual growth.[81] In Coe's thought, such an anthropological pessimism argues that there is nothing in the child that is worth bringing, that development can do nothing for the child, that the child must wait for conversion to happen to him or her.[82] This means that the understanding of humanity becomes a significant element in determining the orientation of religious education programs--either toward conversion or growth. Smart also sharply points out the

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[81] Coe, <u>Education in Religion and Morals</u>, 49.

[82] Coe, <u>Education in Religion and Morals</u>, 50.

relevance of anthropology to educational planning by pointing to the limits of an optimistic anthropology in which humanity "requires, not redemption, but only enlightenment."[83]

One of the basic tenets of those who advocate for the conversion as the aim of education, more specifically of curriculum designs, is that religious education should contribute to the learner's experiencing a conversion. This is because they believe that the only way in which the child can come to understand Christian saving truth is by conversion.[84] The idea of conversion-oriented education theorists is closely related their theological understanding of humanity. The anthropological assumption of this conversionism is that until conversion, people are by nature sinners, isolated from God, and the order of their lives is distorted and perverted by sin.[85] According to conversion-oriented theorists, anyone cannot be regarded as a Christian until he or she has a certain type of conversion experience.[86]

According to Smart, evangelistic religious educators, which were widespread in New England in the nineteenth century, are the representatives of this idea of the conversion-oriented aim of curriculum. According to the

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[83] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 164.

[84] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 162.

[85] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 163.

[86] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 54.

evangelistic doctrine, every child, regardless of the context in which he [she] is nurtured, continues as a creature of sin until the time of a sudden conversion.[87] They argue that in a sense, the conversion is a requisite for human salvation. Therefore, for the children, the most urgent thing in religious life is a becoming a true Christian through conversion experience. According to them, the child is a sinner by nature from birth. And, because the child is completely unable to understand anything of Christian truth, the only way to overcome his or her sinfulness is by conversion.[88]

As such, for the evangelistic educators, the real value of religious education, more specifically the religious curriculum, is its role and function for the child's conversion. According to this evangelistic view of the aim of religious education, it is even futile to try to teach the child in other ways than focusing on a conversion. The only reasonable procedure is to use every possible opportunity to convict the child of sin and to lead the child to repentance and regeneration:[89] "The one thing to be done with the child was to bring every means to bear to effect a conversion, and, until, such conversion took place, the child was to be

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[87] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 52.

[88] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 162.

[89] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 162.

regarded and treated as not yet a Christian."[90] Accordingly, the whole program of religious education, which is grounded in the evangelistic view is thoroughly a conversion-oriented: the conversion of the sinners, and the instruction of the converted that they may grow in grace.[91] A more concrete shape of religious education, which is based on the idea of a conversion as the aim of religious education, is focusing on conversion through right understanding of doctrine versus conversion through right understanding of the scriptures.

Osterman explains that the idea of growth as the aim of religious education is in direct contrast to a focus on conversion which is for the child to have right relationship with God in the future.[92] The idea of the advocator of growth as the aim of education is parallel to the notion of the development of the fullest life of the child as the aim of education. This self-realization-oriented education was a basic spirit of progressive religious education, which is supported by liberal theology, especially in terms of its anthropology.[93] According to liberal perspectives, the child's educational potentials and possibilities are very positively esteemed in the practice of religious education. This means that the child is the being who only has to grow

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[90] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 52.

[91] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 162.

[92] Osterman, 536.

[93] McKibben, 131.

like a flower, stage by stage, until his or her character blossoms forth into its full Christian form.[94]

Coe's idea of religious curriculum shows the existence of relevance of liberal understanding of human nature and the orientation of the aim of the religious curriculum. Coe describes religious education primarily as a process of nurturing the development of personhood towards the full actualization of its ethical and reflective capacities. As such, in Coe's idea, the ultimate aim of religious education is to assist the self-realization of the learner. True education is self-education, including self-originating activity, self-expression, the learner's initiative or freedom, individuality, and the securing possession of the learner's self or free self-realization. This implies that the religious learner is to be active, not passive.[95]

Coe's educational thought, in which self-realization is highly respected, is closely connected to his theological understanding of humanity. In Coe's thought, humanity, including the child as religious learner, is very positive in its nature in terms of religious perspectives. As shown before, a basic tenet of Coe's theological anthropology is that humanity has a religious impulse in it, which is compatible to divinity. According to Coe, although humanity has some sinful instincts, this sinful instinct of humanity

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[94] Coe, _Education in Religion and Morals_, 48.

[95] Coe, _Education in Religion and Morals_, 121-22.

should not be regarded as a fatal element which nullifies the positive and divine nature of humanity as the child of God.

As such, for Coe, the child is a being who needs to be encouraged to actualize his or her innate potentials, not a being who deserves to be cursed as a being under the satan's hands until a conversion takes place. Accordingly, for Coe, the ultimate aim of religious education is the "growth of the young toward and into mature and efficient devotion to the democracy of God, and happy self-realization therein."[96] For it is important for religious education to provide for growth in knowledge of the Christian ideal.[97] Thus, for Coe, even the aim of instruction is to promote the growth of the child.[98]

As seen from previous discussions, in considering the aim of religious education, both the two extremes of theological anthropology—evangelistic and liberal—easily lean toward one aspect of the two significant elements of religious education, resulting in an alienation of one the two aspects—conversion and growth. From an anthropological perspective, this is because the evangelistic pessimism overemphasizes the miserable side of humanity, whereas, the liberal optimism ignores the seriousness of human sinfulness, overemphasizing

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[96] George Albert Coe, A Social Theory of Religious Education (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1917), 55.

[97] Coe, Social Theory, 64.

[98] Coe, Social Theory, 64.

the value of the positive side of humanity. As such, both anthropologies of evangelism and liberalism fail to become an effective mechanism for a comprehensive religious curriculum, supporting a narrow notion of a religious curriculum.

Compared to these extreme orientations toward curriculum aims, Smart's approach to the aims of religious education is more comprehensive. First of all, for Smart, conversion, as a personal religious experience, is recognized as an essential element in forming a true Christian disciple. Smart definitely argues that conversion must have a place in Christian education. Smart even argues that religious education, by its nature, should have an expectation of producing a conversion.[99] Smart deeply appreciates Horace Bushnell's educational ideas about the influence of the parents' character and conviction in forming the child's faith and life.[100] However, Smart does not mean that one can become a Christian merely by growing up in a Christian home.[101] For Smart, it is not true that the parent's faith inevitably becomes the faith of the child.[102] This means, for Smart, what the child receives from Christian parents cannot become a substitute for the learner's personal faith of the

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[99] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 165.

[100] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 53.

[101] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 54.

[102] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 53.

Christian disciple.[103] As such, in Smart' thought, the child
needs a personal conversion in order to become a true
Christian disciple in transforming his or her own self
accruing a recognition of sin and repenting of it.[104]

However, Smart does not neglect the value of the growth
aspect of religious education. In some places, Smart clearly
states that the purpose of religious education is to lend to
learners the assistance that they need in their growth as
Christian persons.[105] According to Smart, the spiritual
growth is a secret, unpredictable matter. In Smart's
thought, we cannot control the spiritual growth of our pupils.
This spiritual growth cannot be channeled into the official
hours of church school or church. The spiritual growth of the
learner cannot be controlled by any teachers or educational
plan.[106] As such, in Smart' thought, the growing aspect,
which is done by God, is seriously discussed as a valuable
task of religious education, more specifically the planning of
a religious curriculum.

As such, in terms of a religious curriculum plan, Smart's
educational approach transcends the limitations of the two
valuable elements of conversion-oriented and growth-oriented
ones. This is possible because Smart does not make a sharp

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[103] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 54.

[104] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 165.

[105] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 155.

[106] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 168.

division between a conversion aspect and a growing one in religious education. In fact, in Smart's educational thought, conversion and growth are not confronted with each other as inter-contradicting elements: "Conversion, therefore, is not to be set in antithesis to moral and spiritual growth."[107]

In terms of anthropological perspectives, Smart is free from either one of the two extremes of narrow evangelism and liberalism. Thus, Smart can propose a comprehensive idea of the aim of religious education which transcends the narrow ideas from two radically different concepts--conversion-centered and growth-centered--which are regarded as antithesis to each other in the extreme anthropologies.[108]

### The Teaching-Learning Component of the Curriculum

Another curriculum component is the model of teaching-learning. Regarding this component, a tension has often existed between the content-centered model and the learner-centered model. Educationally, these two models have emerged in various forms. In some cases, the content-centered model is identified with subject-matter centered models. In other cases, the content-centered model is identified with a predetermined, indoctrinational, and transmissive method. The learner-centered model would be identified with the conduct-response centered method. The learner-centered model is also regarded as discussible and problem-solving method. The focus

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[107] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 165.

[108] Smart, Teaching Ministry, 165.

of the content-centered model is on how to deliver the curriculum content to the learner effectively. The main concern of the learner-centered model is how to help the learner realize his or her own educational potentials.

In religious education, according to the content-centered approach to education, the main function of the curriculum is to impart a given body of religious knowledge to the learner. This content-centered curriculum may consist of a creed, a dogmatic theology, selected portions of the holy Scriptures or a curriculum containing all of those. This curriculum tends to deal with the past, seeking to reproduce in present-day life the ideas, institutions and symbols of yesterday. Followed to its logical extremes it tends to present knowledge as a static and doctrinaire body of dogma.[109]

According to those who follow the content-centered method in religious education, the teacher's functions are fulfilled when so much of material from the Bible, the catechism, or hymns of the church has been lodged in the mind of the learner.[110] According to this content-centered model of the curriculum, the predetermined questions and answers about doctrinal or scriptural materials should be memorized and recited in class.[111]

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[109] Murch, 104-05.

[110] George Herbert Betts, The Curriculum of Religious Education (New York: Abingdon Press, 1924), 242.

[111] Lankard, 94, 132, 197.

The catechetical method is typical of content-centered models of teaching in religious education. Catechisms are built on the point of view that religion is largely based on a body of knowledge, on facts that parents, teachers, and clergypersons must communicate to the nest generation. The catechetical method of acquiring this body of knowledge is that of memorization. When one possesses this body of facts, he or she is considered instructed in the religious life.[112] This memoriter method tends to be supported by a positive belief that the study of Scriptural history and biography is interesting and instructive to youth, for it stores their minds with many valuable facts.[113] As such, the whole catechetical system develops into an unnatural and forced cramming of the mind. In the catechetical method, the teachers represent a "pouring-in-process," with the learner the passive recipient.[114]

In terms of theological anthropology, this content-centered teaching-learning model can be understood as closely related to the evangelistic idea of religious education, with its emphasis on human salvation. According to evangelism, which is pessimistic regarding human nature, salvation can be possible only by God's grace. This means that the source of human salvation is a divine knowledge from without. More

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[112] Lankard, 95.

[113] Lankard, 197.

[114] Lankard, 95.

specifically, this saving-divine knowledge should be obtained from the Bible or sacred doctrine. Since the ultimate purpose of religious education is to obtain the saving knowledge, the most desirable method of religious education is of transmission of the divine knowledge. In this connection, the evangelistic interpretations of humanity becomes an anthropological basis for the content-centered teaching-learning method of religious curriculum.

We can conclude that Edwards' evangelistic anthropology is compatible to the content-centered method of religious curriculum. According to Edwards, the Bible and sermon are the main instrument for learning a divine knowledge, which is a non-discussion based. This does not mean that in Edwards' thought, mere individual dedication can translate divine knowledge from the printed page to the mind. Instead, for Edwards, with prayer, listening to the preacher's exhortation is one of the most effective ways in which divine knowledge can be obtained. For Edwards, concerning salvation, the divine knowledge in the Bible and the preacher's exhortation become significant resources for curriculum as the predetermined content of religious education. As such, shown from Edwards' religious practice, the evangelistic understanding of humanity often becomes an anthropological groundwork which supports the content-centered religious curriculum.

As mentioned previously, the learner-centered model of

teaching-learning is a counterpart to the content-centered one. According to this learner-centered teaching-learning model, educational meanings, insights, and values arise in the process and give direction to it. This learner-centered teaching-learning method is vigorously opposed to the arbitrarily indoctrination method. Insights, principles of living, and current practices of older people are to be shared, not imposed upon the young.[115]

In Coe's thought, in this learner-centered model, inherited ideas like these found in literature become not the thing that is to be learned, but source-material that is to be employed when, and to the extent that, it assists the learner primary learning.[116] The learner-centered curriculum, in its logical extremity, stresses learner participation and demands a place for the learner in government, planning and in some cases through engaging in purposeful or purposed activities. Ideally, the learners themselves propose, plan and execute and judge the measure of their success.[117]

According to this learner-centered teaching-learning model, also in religious education, any body of subject matter does not have an ultimate value. Only life and the living spirit is of ultimate value, and only this is sacred.[118] For

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[115] McKibben, 131-32.

[116] Coe, "Why the Dissatisfaction," 571.

[117] Murch, 103.

[118] Betts, <u>Curriculum of Religious Education</u>, 247.

those who follow the learner-centered model of lessons, religious education is the continuous reconstruction of spiritual experience, with a growing consciousness of religious values, and an increasing skill in and control over the processes of one's own religious activities and experiences.[119] No body of materials, not even the Bible itself, comes first; the child comes first.[120] According to this learner-centered model of teaching and learning in religious education, the learner determines the process and program of religious education. In addition, the mind of the learner is the measure of all things. According to this learner-centered method, there is nothing that exists except that which is known and experienced, and this exists only as it is known by the learner. The curriculum idea which contains authoritative and ultimate truth is rejected. Even the Bible is swept aside as a collection of myths and outdated experiences. In its place this learner-centered method puts human experience.[121] This learner-centered model of teaching and learning conceives its educational task to be, "not to teach the Bible as such, not to reproduce the religious experience of the past, but with the use of these resources, to assist growing persons to achieve a religious adjustment to

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[119] Betts, _Curriculum of Religious Education_, 247.

[120] Betts, _Curriculum of Religious Education_, 247.

[121] Murch, 104.

the present world of reality in which they live."[122]

Coe's idea of teaching-learning method is a learner-centered one. Coe assesses as inadequate the conception of education as helping the learner actualize his or her potential by simply aiding his or her unfolding powers.[123] In Coe's thought, the growth of the person cannot be mere mechanical compulsion, mere molding of material, mere heaping up, or storing of anything. In one word, for Coe, education is not a mechanical but a vital process.[124] As such, Coe is consistently for the active rather than static pedagogy and for discovery rather than mechanical transmission. For Coe, just as the body grows, not by some external force acting upon it, but by the inward assimilation of food, so do human beings develop intellectually and emotionally.[125]

In Coe's idea, the educator's task is to find out what the learner needs and having provided it, to rely upon the internal process of assimilation to do the rest.[126] As such, for Coe, instruction cannot really accomplish the aims of education, for it deals too much with intellect, while education has reference to the whole living being.[127] In the

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[122] Murch, 104.

[123] Coe, Social Theory, 15.

[124] Coe, Education in Religion and Morals, 98-99.

[125] Coe, Education in Religion and Morals, 98-99.

[126] Coe, Education in Religion and Morals, 102.

[127] Coe, Education in Religion and Morals, 106.

same manner, Coe also refuses an imposition-centered curriculum, which is set and imposed upon the learner by the teachers. Coe thinks that a stereotyped rigidity characterizes the imposition-centered curriculum. In addition, whether the curriculum fits with new surroundings and circumstances or not is rigorously applied without any flexibility or preparation for accommodation. Over against this theory, Coe sets a concept of curricular concerned with living situations and interaction between personalities, directed toward developing interest and not merely feeding interests already present.[128] Thus, Coe talks about his approach as creative, pupil-centered and life-situational, and contrasts it with transmissive education.[129]

Coe denounces the transmissive method because he thinks that this method keeps education from becoming propositional, dogmatic, authoritarian, and passive.[130] In one word, for Coe, a sound teaching-learning method is not the transmission of dogmatically determined beliefs and practices, but an experiment in being Christian, an experiment through which the meaning of being a Christian unfolds itself to us.[131] "To memorize facts and formulas, however sacred they may be," Coe charges, "is not to learn religion; to teach about religion is

[128] Wyckoff, Theory and Design, 33.

[129] Coe, What is Christian Education?, 35-86.

[130] Coe, "Why the Dissatisfaction," 571.

[131] Coe, What is Christian Education?, 21.

not to teach religion; mere instruction no more conveys religion than it conveys health."[132]

Coe's explanation of worship in terms of religious education clearly shows the nature of his learner-centered educational method. Coe writes:

> We shall include in the curriculum the experience of worship, but we shall awaken in children's minds the problem of worship, and we shall lead them on to the free control and improvement of their worship. We shall include participation in activities of various kinds in the church and in the community, but this participation will be so planned that pupils will judge both ends and processes, and dare to change either. We shall not withhold from pupils any part of the churches heritage of beliefs and hopes, but we shall not do pupils' thinking for them, giving them cut-and-dried conclusions, and then searching for means to make these conclusions seem true and important. Rather, we shall turn attention to the experiences out of which important beliefs grow, that is, the points in life at which problems arise, and we shall then scrupulously put at the disposal of pupils the sources and the methods for real thinking.[133]

In terms of anthropology, this learner-centered teaching-learning method is supported by a progressive understanding of human nature, which suggests that the learner has innate positive potential in terms of education. As shown before, Coe's idea that humanity is not passive is a typical anthropological basis which supports the learner-centered

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[132] Coe, "Can Religion Be Taught?" inaugural address, delivered at Union Theological Seminary, New York, 16 Nov. 1909, 17.

[133] Coe, "Opposing Theories of the Curriculum," 147.

teaching-learning model. As such, according to Coe, "Education is not a mechanical but a vital process."[134] This, in turn, requires that humanity possess self-knowledge and exercise self-control.[135] As shown in Coe's educational idea, this progressive optimism regarding human nature becomes an anthropological basis which strongly supports the learner-centered teaching-learning method.

From the perspectives of a comprehensive religious curriculum, both the teaching-learning methods-- content-centered and learner-centered-- are truly valuable. The values of both methods are in the fact that these two methods overcome the limitations of the opposite methods of teaching and learning. However, when we fail to use these two methods in a synthetic way, the teaching-learning easily falls into a narrow approach to education.

In that sense, Smart's educational approach becomes a more effective device in creating a comprehensive religious curriculum. This is because Smart envisions a teaching-learning method which does not alienate any one of the two extreme methods. For Smart, this concern begins with his recognition of a sharp controversy between advocates of a Bible-centered curriculum and advocates of a child-centered one.[136] For Smart, in the first place, the value of the

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[134] Coe, _Education in Religion and Morals_, 98.

[135] Coe, _Education in Religion and Morals_, 99.

[136] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 155.

content-centered teaching-learning method is deeply
appreciated. This is revealed in Smart's idea that the
ultimate aim of Christian education is to transmit God's
revelation. As mentioned previously, the transmission method
is a typical aspect of the content-centered one, but Smart
does not use the term transmission, and instead uses the term
"communication." Smart says that we should know nothing of
the Christian faith today had it not been for a human channel
of communication.[137] According to Smart, the Christian faith
must be communicated from person to person in its nature, and
Christian education is a part of that communicating
channel.[138]

Smart explains the value of the content-centered
teaching-learning model in practical terms, identifying the
fallacy in the learner-centered approach. According to Smart,
a curriculum based upon the needs of the learner might be in
danger of becoming a very thin and watery curriculum,
particularly if much weight is given to what the child
conceives to be his or her needs. Smart puts forth this case
in a more concrete words:

> Not many young people of high school age
> feel a need to know Latin or French. They
> have no overpowering desire to explore the
> mysteries of Roman civilization or of French
> literature. But, if they do not lay the
> foundations of language study then, whether
> they feel the need or not, the doors will be

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[137] Smart, <u>Church Must Teach</u>, 13.

[138] Smart, <u>Church Must Teach</u>, 13-14.

closed against them later, so that important
areas of human experience will have little
meaning for them.[139]

About the problem of the learner-centered method, Smart

definitely says that "In its zeal to establish this [learner-

centered] principle, the religious movement went to

unnecessary extremes."[140] "There was," Smart continues to

say:

> Much talk of a "child-centered"
> curriculum in contrast to a "Bible-centered"
> one, and the orthodox pattern of curriculum
> development became, first, to set down the
> known needs of the child or youth in order
> of importance, and then to plan courses
> through which each of the needs would be
> likely to find its satisfaction.[141]

This explanation is based on Smart's conviction that it

is not always what is at present most interesting that is

permanently most valuable. Furthermore, a curriculum that set

itself to teach only what is most relevant to the learner's

existing needs would be likely to sacrifice many of the most

important elements in our cultural heritage.[142] Accordingly,

Smart expresses his deep appreciation of the value of the

content-centered teaching-learning model in this way:

> So also a Christian education curriculum
> that can find little place for the Bible or
> doctrine or Church history, because they do not
> meet an observable need of the pupil, may be

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[139] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 155.

[140] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 155.

[141] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 155.

[142] Smart, _Teaching Ministry_, 155-56.

suspected of forming its estimate of the child
in something other than a fully Christian
context.[143]

However, Smart establishes a comprehensive curriculum
method by choosing not to overlook the value of the learner-
centered teaching-learning model. This idea is clearly
revealed in Smart's thought that Christian education has as
its purpose not in the pouring of a body of information into
the learner's mind, but the lending to the learner of the
assistance that the learner need now in the learner's growth
as a Christian person.[144] Smart's real appreciation of the
value of the learner-centered model is felt from his pointing
out the limits of the transmissive method in educational
plans.

Smart criticizes the transmissively-oriented Bible study
in his day which was mainly oriented toward the conveying of
information: "Much Bible teaching has been no more than an
imparting of information about persons and incidents recorded
in the Bible, without any attempt to show what these things
mean for life today."[145] Referring to the transmission method
of information, Smart argues that when the Bible is
consistently taught on the purely informational level, the
impression is created that the Bible is irrelevant to

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[143] Smart, <u>Teaching Ministry</u>, 156.

[144] Smart, <u>Teaching Ministry</u>, 155.

[145] Smart, <u>Church Must Teach</u>, 38.

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life.[146]  The problem of this transmission method is in the fact that we become Christians by knowing what is in the Bible rather than by responding in faith to God who speaks to us through the Bible.[147]

In this connection, Smart highly values the learner-centered educational program as one of the most praiseworthy achievements of the religious education movement: "We do not teach subject matter.  We teach the child."[148]  Actually, this movement constituted a reaction against a type of teaching in which the teacher merely sets up a lesson on a certain subject and delivers prepared matter to the class. This type of teaching is without any very careful consideration as to whether or not the subject matter is relevant to the present experience and needs of the members of the class.

> As individual persons, each at a
> different stage in his religious development,
> they were ignored, and not attempt was made
> even to discover what their most urgent
> problems might be.  Among kindergarten and
> primary children it usually meant that the
> children had poured out upon them a mass of
> Biblical stories and information, often
> without any thought being given to the
> question whether or not the material was
> within their range of comprehension.[149]

With a sharp recognition of the values and limitations of

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[146] Smart, <u>Church Must Teach</u>, 38.

[147] Smart, <u>Church must Teach</u>, 38-39.

[148] Smart, <u>Teaching Ministry</u>, 154.

[149] Smart, <u>Teaching Ministry</u>, 154.

the two extremes of content-centered and learner-centered teaching-learning models, Smart imagines a comprehensive framework of the teaching-learning model. According to his comprehensive spirit, Smart writes an ideal curriculum plan as follows:

> In contrast to the Bible-information course is the life-problem course, which concentrates upon some immediate situation in the pupil's world and, by discussion of its various aspects, tries to lead them to a satisfactory solution. This type of course too often gets nowhere because it fails to bring the message of the Bible to bear upon the problem. What is needed, however, is a drawing together of these two interests into one, so that whenever the Bible is studied the question is asked, "What does this means for us in our present life situation?"; and whenever life-problems are under discussion the question is asked, "What light do the Scriptures throw upon this problem and its solution?"[150]

In terms of anthropology, this comprehensive curriculum framework is possible, in part, because Smart deeply appreciates the dual nature of the learner--the learner's necessity to be guided from without and the learner's innate potential in education. As such, Smart's synthetical understanding of humanity becomes an anthropological basis for a comprehensive teaching-learning model in which the two different principles of method are synthesized in one curriculum framework.

Christian Faith and Life, the curriculum of Christian education in the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. for which Smart

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[150] Smart, Church Must Teach, 38.

served as Editor-in-Chief from 1944 to 1950, gives some clues

that we can recognize as a comprehensive synthetic feature of

religious curriculum. The curriculum component showing the

clearest synthesis between the two radically different

orientations is the content. With respect to the knowledge-

base of curriculum, one introductory statement of the series

Christian Faith and Life says:

> The Bible has a central place in
> this curriculum. It is through this
> record of God's revelation of him [or
> her]self that he [or her] may be heard
> speaking now. Only as children and
> youth-and adults too, for that matter-
> become familiar with the Bible, and
> learn how to use it, will they find in
> it the way to fellowship with God in
> all the relationships of life-social,
> political, economic, and moral.[151]

However, soon after, the Christian Faith and Life curriculum

also emphasizes the value of the learners' experience in the

educational process, saying that,

> Children and youth cannot take
> over a ready-made body of truth from
> other people. They must wrestle with
> each aspect of truth in the light of
> their experience until they make it
> their own and until it becomes a part
> of their lives.[152]

As such, the Christian Faith and Life curriculum is a good

example of religious curriculum which combines knowledge-

centered curriculum and experience-centered curriculum into a

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[151] Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., A Program for Church and Home, Christian Faith and Life (Philadelphia: Board of Christian Education, PCUSA, 1948), 9.

[152] Program for Church and Home, 9.

comprehensive framework.

In terms of the grading principle, the <u>Christian Faith and Life</u> curriculum edited by Smart took a grade-oriented form, making six groupings of curriculum. Although Smart deeply recognized the conservative-evangelists' argument regarding anthropology, which provided a clue to nullify the age difference in the curriculum plan, the <u>Christian Faith and Life</u> series was based in a deep appreciation of the pedagogical value of graded curriculum materials. Actually, the <u>Christian Faith and Life</u> curriculum includes very direct arguments to that affect: "A frank recognition of the different abilities, capacities, and limitations of children at the various age levels makes grading necessary."[153] The <u>Christian Faith and Life</u> curriculum even recommends that in larger churches further grading is possible. However, it needs to be noted that the actual form of the curriculum was based in the group-graded principle, or departmental grading, which is regarded as a combination of the uniform and the closely graded curriculum.

The <u>Christian Faith and Life</u> series does not treat the aims of curriculum in terms of the conversion versus the self-realizing orientations. However, the series implicitly puts importance on both sides. Basically, the <u>Christian Faith and Life</u> curriculum attempts to guide the child to grow up in the fellowship of the Church by participation in its life, and in

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[153] <u>Program for Church and Home</u>, 5.

this setting God makes his [or her] revelation known.[154] However, the authors of the <u>Christian Faith and Life</u> curriculum also deeply appreciate the value of the children's development at various stages:

> It should be stressed that discipleship,
> conceived in these terms, is not exclusively
> an adult responsibility. Nor is the aim of
> Christian education to produce full-fledged
> adult Christians as some later date. God
> reveals him[her]self to children and youth
> at various stages of their development, and
> the call to discipleship is not contingent
> upon a person's reaching a certain age.[155]

As such, this offers a good example in the <u>Christian Faith and Life</u> curriculum that the two different orientations of aims of religious curriculum (conversion and self-realization) are synthetically embedded in one curriculum plan.

Another important characteristic of the <u>Christian Faith and Life</u> curriculum is the development of activity materials for use in the class sessions on Sunday and also in home.[156] In that sense, this series can be identified as activity-centered curriculum. Actually, this <u>Christian Faith and Life</u> curriculum presents various activity resources, such as independent or group research, or special studies engaged in by the class as a whole. This is clearly different from the catechetical curriculum resource which is thoroughly memory oriented. However, the <u>Christian Faith and Life</u> curriculum

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[154] <u>Program for Church and Home</u>, 4.

[155] <u>Program for Church and Home</u>, 4-5.

[156] <u>Program for Church and Home</u>, 7.

does not miss the value of the memorizing religious truth in educational practice. Interestingly, the series recommends that parents read the pupil's reading books to the nursery children "over and over again."[157] Furthermore, that series often presents the key Biblical verses for the children to memorize. As such, the value of memory method is incorporated, although the <u>Christian Faith and Life</u> curriculum took an activity-centered approach to teaching-learning, especially in the more explicit design.

### An Anthropological Balance in Curriculum Plan

Lois E. LeBar, a Protestant evangelical education theorist, who served as professor and chairperson of the Christian Education Department at Wheaton College, is sensitive to the dualistic trends in religious curriculum planning. Referring to the difference between content-centered and learner-centered curriculum, LeBar writes:

> In the former concept we visualize the pupils goaded by teachers to sprint straight for the prescribed goal over a narrow track that is clearly laid out for them. In the latter, we see the pupils strolling through wide field, stopping to study the flowers and birds that interest them.[158]

An important question relating to anthropology in curriculum planning is "Who do we think the pupils are?" Do we need to goad them to sprint for the goal? Or, may we permit the

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[157] <u>Program for Church and Home</u>, 11.

[158] Lois E. LeBar, "Curriculum," in <u>An Introduction to Evangelical Christian Education</u>, ed. J. Edward Hakes (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), 86.

pupils to stroll through a wild field?  Or, do we need to provide them with both--goad and permission--at the same time?

As discussed previously, theological anthropologies historically have been one of the most influential elements in determining who we think the learners are in religious education practice.  The real issue underlying this discussion so far is not about which idea of the learners is right or wrong.  This is because our belief is that any kinds of anthropological assumptions can be supported by their own empirical validities, much as the blind persons' arguments, in the fable of "The Blind Man and the Elephant," have their own rationale.  However, it is clear that if we would prepare for only one of the two--a goad or permission--we might fail to treat effectively the pupils whose nature are not monolithic.

Impressive is LeBar's observation about an irony in the field of religious education in regarding curriculum: "Though both content and experience are generally acknowledged to be necessary in structuring any curriculum, one of these elements becomes the source of authority which takes priority over the other."[159]  Our observation is that LeBar's irony is parallel to the four most prominent curriculum components discussed in this chapter.  In envisioning a comprehensive religious curriculum, the two characteristic anthropologies-- evangelistic and liberal--should not be stumbling blocks due to their theological narrowness.  Together, they can provide

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[159] LeBar, 90.

a comprehensive anthropology and an abundance of knowledge about the nature of the learners in religious education practice.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusion: The Value of Smart's
### Paradoxical Understanding of Human
### Nature in a Comprehensive Curriculum Plan

Mary Elizabeth Moore has said that dualistic thinking, which is a philosophical result of dichotomy, is dominant in western culture,[1] and it is persistent in religious education.[2] Moore has written that one of tasks of religious educators is to overcome such (dualistic) thinking in religious education,[3] and then she actually implemented it with her traditioning-method. As mentioned previously, Moore is not the only person who wants to overcome dualistic thinking in programming religious education. Moore cites many persons who have become involved in this task including George A. Coe, John Dewey, C. Ellis Nelson, John H. Westerhoff III, Dwayne Huebner, Bernard Meland, Thomas Groome, and Mary C. Boys.[4] In this connection, it needs to be noted that Smart also is one of those involved in this task.

A critical reason why we need to overcome this dualistic thinking in religious education is that this thinking tends to become a theoretical basis of a pathologically narrow program of religious education. By pathology, this means a conceptual distortion according to which a fragment is misunderstood as

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[1] Moore, 17.

[2] Moore, 27.

[3] Moore, 17.

[4] Moore, 45-55.

a total, and a part is misunderstood as a whole. The fable presenting a village of the blind is a good example of the distortion. As shown so far, Smart's device to overcome this pathology is a paradoxical synthesis. By its nature, Smart's synthesis is formulated with his distrust and trust which are mutually contradictory--his distrust and trust to the two extremes understandings of human nature. The core of Smart's paradox is in the fact that his trust and distrust co-exist in his one educational framework.

In the first place, Smart's educational discourse is firmly based on his distrust about the two extreme understandings of human nature which promoted a dualistic approach to religious education. In thinking about Smart's anthropological approach, we can imagine three kinds of Christian theologies: two--conservative evangelism and progressive liberalism-- are regarded as the symbols of the dualistic theology, and Neo-orthodoxism can be considered as a symbol of the more comprehensive theology.[5]

As James C. Logan states, these theological labels might become more slippery and difficult to apply with precision.[6] However, in Smart's thought, the definition of the nature of two extreme theologies--conservative evangelism and progressive liberalism--in terms of anthropology is not obscure. As identified previously, for Smart, evangelism and

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[5] Elias, 41.

[6] Logan, 19.

liberalism are the products of <u>and</u> the producer of the western dualistic theology which promotes the pathological visions of religious education program.

Secondly, Smart's trust in the two extremes is in the fact that the two extremes are valuable in illustrating some real aspects of human nature although those tend to alienate some other aspects. In other words, Smart knows that the two extremes have good elements which are necessary constituents in creating a comprehensive understanding of human nature. In this connection, Smart does not think that the two extremes in understanding of human nature are mutually antithetic, but that those two can help in transcending the limitations of the two extremes.

In this complex situation, in which the diversity of users needs to be taken in account, it is not difficult to imagine the ineffectiveness of a narrowly identified religious curriculum. Long ago, Wyckoff expressed this concern, writing that the curriculum must be inclusive of as many curriculum elements as possible.[7] Wyckoff's concern was related to the issue of curriculum scope. However, this comprehensiveness is needed in considering other issues of curriculum, as in re-defining the notion of curriculum and in creating a more effective idea of curriculum components.

In envisioning a more effective curriculum, it need to be noted that the ideal curriculum is the one which is precise

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[7] Wyckoff, <u>Theory and Design</u>, 112.

but not narrow, and is comprehensive but not chaotic. Furthermore, the ideal curriculum is the one which does not alienate any value of curriculum principles. In that sense, the ideal curriculum program is one tension between the two. The real value of Smart's educational approach is in the fact that a picture of the ideal curriculum is imagined in it. As shown before, Smart's framework for a program of religious education contains both values of the two mutually contradictory elements between evangelism and liberalism in a paradoxical pattern. For Smart, the theoretical mechanism which combines the two extreme elements is a paradoxical synthesis whose core is observed in his understanding of human nature.

As Bushnell states, paradox may be the most adequate expression of religious truth.[8] In fact, because of the diversity and complexity of reality and also because of the limitations of finite human reason, human best efforts to know reality bring it to the production of equally reasonable yet irreconcilable truths--paradox. In such cases humanity may be nearer the truth when he or she espouses both sides of a paradoxical issue than when he or she gives up one side in favor of the other.[9] In this connection, a paradoxical mechanism is not new to religious thinkers, including religious educators. In fact, historically, paradoxes have

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[8] See Sparkman, 125.

[9] "Paradox," Evangelical Dictionary of Theology.

been put forth to explain such religious statements that seem absurd: "Eternal God became humanity, and died."

However, in more frequent, paradox has been used to transcend the logical conflicts between two mutually contradicting but really true elements of religious truth. The examples are Chalcedonian Christology (as true humanity and true divinity), Lutheran ecclesiology (as visible institution and invisible communion), and Niebuhrian anthropology (as transcend and immanence). Smart's paradox is the latter case which combines the mutually contradictory elements. The real value of Smart's curriculum idea is in the fact that he applies the wisdom of a paradoxical mechanism in creating a comprehensive theory of religious education.

I believe that a paradoxical mechanism is a really valuable gift from God to humanity which the radical differences are fused into one system to human theory. I also believe that this paradoxical mechanism can be an invaluable wisdom through which unnecessary conflicts, coming from a non-synthetical thinking, can be reduced in peace. In that sense, I believe that this paradoxical mechanism is one of the most significant issues whose real meaning and value should be continually re-discovered in the future. I believe that the real value of Smart's paradoxical understanding of human nature is in the fact that Smart can project an educational vision for a comprehensive religious curriculum through applying this paradoxical mechanism to create an effective

religious curriculum. Smart's synthetic approach to religious education with a paradoxical anthropology will surely contribute to envisioning a comprehensive educational plan, especially in the Christian communities which are theologically multiple.

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